

**CLASS
STRUGGLES
IN THE USSR
THIRD PERIOD: 1930-
1941**

PART I: THE DOMINATED

**CHARLES
BETTELHEIM**

Class struggles in the USSR

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by

Charles Bettelheim

Translated by

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Part One: The Dominated

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Preface to the French Edition

STALINISM was one, systematic, whole.

Analysis of the class struggle in the USSR during the 1930s confronts a situation which was particularly complicated, and rapidly changing. It has required an order of research which cannot be reproduced in the order of exposition. The results of our analysis of Stalinism and its realities will therefore be presented in two volumes: the first volume is devoted to the dominated (peasants, workers, the repression and mass terror which struck them, capital accumulation and its particular crises which made them its victims); the second volume deals with the dominators, their ideology and its changes in the 1930s, the manifestations of the new class and the historical conditions of its formation, the role of the Party and of the USSR's foreign policy.

This order of exposition will enhance clarity but at the same time will not prevent certain repetitions necessary for an understanding of the step-by-step evolution of the different elements and factors which make up, from top to bottom, Stalinism. The reader is asked to tolerate a little inconsistency in this regard.

— C.B.

Preface to the English Edition of the Third Volume (First Part) of Class Struggles in the USSR

THE appearance in English of the third volume of *Class Struggles in the USSR* comes ten years after its publication in French, ten years of economic, political and social upheavals of exceptional importance. These upheavals have directly touched those countries who claimed allegiance to socialism and have produced enduring effects on the international scene, one of which lies in viewing the current transformation as a testimony of the "failure of socialism".

On the alleged "failure of socialism"

The present work stands opposed to this thesis since it reveals that the USSR and the other countries who had declared that they had "built socialism" had not actually accomplished any of the radical social transformations which could have permitted them to break away from this specific form of state capitalism which I have described as "party capitalism". In fact, it is the latter which has failed.

This failure was brought about in the USSR through the aggravation of a general crisis born from the contradictions of the capitalist mode of production and particular forms reclothed by these contradictions under conditions of party capitalism. All the so-called socialist countries have entered into a similar process. These have developed according to specific modalities determined by their own history.

These countries had a number of similar characteristics; they were all for example, subject to the leadership of a single party which upheld its legitimacy from Marx's works. Among other objectives, this book seeks to throw light on the usurped character of this "legitimacy".

Against this background, it seems to me useful to present some other remarks.

On Marx's work

The analyses presented here bear upon the scientific content of the work inaugurated by Marx. This work is very much alive, open to newer fields of enquiry and therefore capable of being enriched through rectifications and criticisms inspired by experience and social practices. Indeed, it is precisely this capacity which has allowed it to remain current and relevant.

These two qualities have been confirmed by the movement of contemporary history: by the unfolding of the crisis of international capitalism which entails a deepening of social and economic polarisation, increase in unemployment and under-employment, rise in criminality, corruption and the use of drugs, escalation of armed conflicts, etc., on the one hand, while on the other hand, these qualities are confirmed by the ability of Marx's works to take into account the contradictions of several allegedly socialist models and their consequences.

The scientific character of most of Marx's work concerns above everything else, his analysis of the capitalist mode of production, its structures and contradictions and illuminating the laws governing its movement. Marx showed how the working of these laws led to a growing domination of the market order, the extension of the domination of capital and its globalisation, accumulation of riches at one end of the "society" (now extending to the entire planet), and poverty at the other end. Social struggles led victoriously by the exploited are the only means by which the working of these laws can be breached and the social relations upon which they are founded be smashed.

That Marx's scientific work was able to anticipate the subsequent transformations of capitalism and its major consequences must not lead in a paradoxical manner to the illusion

that – contrary to other sciences, Marx's scientific work will be infallible and capable of formulating "eternal truths" touching upon a future that is situated beyond the scope of all social practice.

Marx had on many occasions guarded against those who believed they could predict the future. He had recalled that "men make their own history" and that the outcome of these struggles is not "guaranteed" so long as these have not been overcome. Also, even if his writings are far from being exempt of prophetic declarations, (the range and scope of which are well worth exploring), he had himself, rightly criticised those who sought – according to his expression – "to boil the pots of the future" and predesign the concrete forms of the transition to a "classless society" (see, *Critique of the Gotha Programme*). He knew that history had more imagination than us and that its "irony" could be bitter. Today, while the movement for the abolition of the existing order is going through an exceptional crisis, it is important as never before for those who claim to be fidel to Marx's work to show proof of their initiative and not condemn it to paralysis. For this purpose, they must in order to enrich it, treat this work – as is the case with all sciences – in a manner that does not hesitate to question its conclusions and its fundamentals when this is necessary since the only way of keeping a science alive is to take into account that which real history and practice never fail to teach us.

It is all the more necessary to bear these considerations in mind since ignoring them or occulting them has served to maintain the established "order" and has allowed adherents of the latter to speak of the "failure of Marxism". In this context, it is necessary to present a few other reflections by way of supporting what has been outlined above.

On the alleged "failure of marxism"

The possible points of departure of the reflections that follow are several. I have chosen to begin by questioning Bukharin's affirmation according to which Marx's work constituted a "block of steel". It seems to me that this point of departure is justified since this affirmation had implicitly sustained "Soviet Marxism" (to which it served as a "title of legitimacy") and can

foster several other forms of dogmatism. Now, a serious examination of Marx's work reveals that this is indeed questionable.

Comparing Marx's work to a "block of steel" is to already betray it through a denial of its historical insertion, its continuous development and its essential characteristics. Accepting this comparison provides the possibility of arbitrarily choosing any "quotation" taken from a complex work to unduly "justify" so-called "Marxist" analyses and conclusions but which are actually deprived of any sound basis.

Marx was highly conscious of the risk of distortion especially since this often occurred under his own eyes. He had denounced what he called "self-styled Marxism", declaring to Laffargue: "What is clear is that I myself am not a Marxist" (letter from Engels to Bernstein dated November 3, 1882).

Since these words were delivered, history has largely confirmed its bearer. It has shown that it is indispensable to recognise that Marx's work is rich, multiple and tirelessly creative; that – like all living reality – it includes contradictory aspects, and to arbitrarily abstract one of these at the expense of ignoring the context is tantamount to not respecting the integral nature of Marx's work.

It may also be recalled that concrete historical development and social struggles gave birth to not one but several Marxisms. Those who declared themselves the most "orthodox" were the most dogmatic; the worst deviations from the struggle for social emancipation were committed in their name. These Marxisms provided the weapons to fight the exploited and oppressed by calling upon them to respect an order which was none other than the established order even though it had been "smeared in red" as Lenin said of the Soviet state apparatus in 1921.

We cannot therefore speak of a failure of Marxism since the latter does not exist; what exists are several Marxisms which derive their origins from social struggles and from different aspects of Marx's work. Such a proposition might appear discouraging. In my view however it is not since it calls for the development of the only kind of Marxism that is defensible: critical Marxism.

For a critical Marxism

"Critical Marxism" is the rational kernel of Marx's work and

one of the works of those who remain 'solid' to him. This does not however consist in simply repeating what he said but in retaining that which is in fact essential to forge ahead.

Remaining 'solid' to Marx's work in this sense has several important implications above all, it involves not looking for answers in his work which as yet do not exist or which are not at any rate to be found there. Marx was – as anyone else (to borrow an expression from Hegel) a child of his time. Respecting this requirement is the only way of rendering Marx's work forever current and powerful by enrichening it through lessons made possible by and which cannot be bypassed – from practice and history.

This then implies a need to continuously extend the movement of Marx's work, the movement that enabled him to develop a radical critique of the existing order, the causes of which he not only denounced but also showed that they could only get worse, something which the experience of the past century tragically illustrates.

It also implies the task of extracting the maximum of knowledge from under what this order – now transformed as stated – can the best possible.

Further, it implies having to take into account the evolution and change in order to extract lessons and realize what the old might have wrongly suggested. The emergence of new social transformations as a result of earlier trials is something thought in class struggle and popular movements in which Marx was a hard core detail of importance which he denoted.

The main emphasis of the writing is to not let be the act of the workers themselves – this ready concerned any kind of dictatorial power from a leader imposed to a party which wished to view itself as the guide of the revolution.

Finally, it is an effort to keep alive the spirit of Marx's thoughts and see how best one can apply his methodology that we have seen according to the method of the *Capital*.

A critical analysis of this kind tends to prevent all pre-arranged methodologies which can only be conservative and consequently serve the existing order. Repression can only reinforce the system. Pre-revolutionary concepts demand that the remaining power to be practice a free society that is indispensable to the conquest of freedom.

The failure of pseudo-socialisms and dogmatic Marxisms that were linked to them heralds the beginning of a period during which the revolutionary character of critical Marxism can clearly develop and manifest itself. Among the scientific tasks that need to be urgently addressed include a balance sheet of pseudo socialisms and their ideologies, an exercise in critical reflection having a bearing upon the different Marxisms in a manner that retains their positive lessons and rejects the rest, analysis of the forms of domination of capitalist apparatuses and the modalities of their transformation into private capitalists and the new forms assumed by the class struggle while the domination of capital considered globally, is tending towards greater concentration to an extent that has no precedent hitherto.

The present work which attempts to show what "socialism" and Soviet "Marxism" had been can perhaps be considered as the beginning of a necessary renewal of critical and revolutionary Marxism.

Charles Bettelheim
Paris, June 1993

Translated by Ramanathan Narayanswamy Bangalore, July 1993

Key to abbreviations and Russian words used in the text

Arte.	Traditional form of cooperative
CC	Central Committee of CPSU (B.)
Sharaga	Research establishment of NKVD staffed by detainees
CPSU, B.	Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)
Gosplan	State Planning Commission
GPU	State Political Administration (Security Service)
Guag	Labor camp administration
Khozraschivot	Application of proper accounting procedures
Kn khozisentr	Central organization for managing the USSR's collective farms
Kolkhoz	Collective farm
Kolkhoznik	Collective farm peasant
Kulakhatotsaya	De very contract system between state collecting organizations and the peasants or kolkhozes
Reau	Region
Mir	Traditional peasant commune
MTS	Machine and Tractor Station
NEP	New Economic Policy
NKVD	Commissariat of the Interior
OGPU	Successor organization of GPU with its security functions taken over by the NKVD
Orgnabor	Organized recruitment
Otruda	Local organizations of Labor Commissariat
Kaión	District
KKR	Commission for settling labor disputes
Serednyak	Middle average) peasant
Skhod	Traditional peasant assembly
Sovkhoz	State farm
Sovnarkom	Council of People's Commissars
Traktorsertr	Central organization for distributing and managing the tractor stock
Trudoden'	Accounting unit used on collective farms for calculating payments to peasants (literally labor-day (plural <i>trudodni</i>))
VShKh	Supreme Economic Council
Zek	Detainee (true Russian abbreviation, ZK for prisoner plural zeki)

Key to abbreviations used in bibliographical notes

EG	<i>Ekonomicheskaya gazeta</i>
Ist SSSR	<i>Istoriya SSSR</i>
KP	<i>Komsomolskaya pravda</i>
KPSS (1953)	<i>KPSS i resolutsiyakh i resheniyakh</i> (1953 edition)
KSAh	<i>Kollektivizatsiya selskogo khozyaistva</i> (Moscow 1951)
Lit Gaz	<i>Literaturnaya gazeta</i>
NKh. 1961g	<i>Narodnoye khozyaistvo v 1961g</i> (year may vary)
PS	<i>Partinoye stroitel'stvo</i>
Tsgaoar	Central state archives of the October Revolution
VI	<i>Voprosy istorii</i>
ZI	<i>Za industrializatsiyu</i>

Directions for use

VOLUMES 3 and 4 of *Class Struggles in the Russian State* take the provisional terminus of a route for which volumes 1 and 2 were important stages. This route which here I do not discuss from a personal aspect led me to results and re-evaluations which raise questions about some of the suggestions put forward in the first two volumes of this study. In fact I have felt it necessary to modify my earlier characterization of the October Revolution and its aftermath. The present text is largely devoted to this new characterization.

Before embarking on new formulations I should add that these are not the result simply of research (devoted in this case to Russia) and of a studied contemplation. They have been impressed upon me not only by analysis of what has happened in the USSR but also by many recent events, especially those involving China, Vietnam, and India and Poland. These events exemplify the attraction exerted by a proletarian transformation, one which leads to gradually breaking in the strands of a totalitarian system in which a single party makes a right to manage state and society and to reserve freedom of speech to itself alone. Moreover general of books recently published about the Russian Revolution and a return to the analysis of Soviet history in the 1930s have made clearer the gap separating the speeches and promises of October from revolutionary and postrevolutionary reality.² Consideration of

this gap and revealing the reasons for it was, right from the start one of the aims of this study. I believe that I am now closer to this objective than I was when I prepared the first volume.

I would add that discussions I have had with those kind enough to read parts of the preliminary drafts of Volumes 1 and 2 of this study's whether they agreed with me or not have given me considerable help in evaluating, in a way I might otherwise not have done, the significance and the distinctive features of the October Revolution.

As is known, the October insurrection interrupted a plural revolutionary process which began in February 1917 with the fall of tsarism and the formation of a provisional government.

A first component of this process was a peasant revolution, movement of enormous strength, which in the countryside completely shook the established order. In effect the peasant revolution led to the clearing out progressive of the land of the big ~~zemstva~~ ~~zemstva~~. This began before October and continued afterward.

A second component was that which involved the hopes of social emancipation entertained by certain parts of the working class and intellectual classes. These hopes took concrete form in the development of the activity of the soviets or the council of factory committees and the very growth of their size. They were also manifested by the movement in favor of democratic freedoms, installation of a representative system and of a state founded on law. The struggle for the convening of a Constituent Assembly formed part of this movement.

A third component finally is that which a certain sector of the Marxist "vulgar" bourgeoisie tries to designate as the bourgeois and anti-imperialist revolution and as opposed to the socialist revolution, but whose historical significance cannot be conveyed by these terms. The latter refer to a certain revolutionary mythology to the conflict between the old (1905) and the new (1917) which is in the process of being born. This third component of the revolutionary process corresponds to the revolt of part of the people and of the Russian intelligentsia who do not wish to see their country continuing to serve as an instrument for imperialist goals, struggling for a new share-out of the world and who also resent the subordinate place of Russia on the world economic stage.

political scene. The leaders of this movement demanded their power mainly to govern the country through the soviets and they allotted an essential role to the state's takeover of the means of production in order to develop rapidly the productive forces.

On the political and the revolutionary process which began in February 1917 was characterized by the multiplicity throughout the country of councils or soviets composed of workers, peasants and soldiers, or of their delegates. Between February and October 1917 the real political power transfer that existed was divided into two (hence the expression dual leadership used to describe the situation of that time which is the situation of revolutionary crisis). These two powers (the provisional government on the one hand the soviets on the other) were extremely weak and their authority diminished did not extend throughout the entire country.

The February Revolution therefore marked the start of a series of complex transformations which were accompanied by a broad popular mobilization, a relative strengthening of the authority of the soviets and the development of the influence of the Bolsheviks over a section of the masses whose aspirations for an immediate peace and an urgent demand for the expropriation of land to the peasants were expressed.

The conception which Lenin gave of the February revolution which developed after February 1917, when he wrote "The Entanglement of Bourgeois Democracy and Proletarian Revolution" is for his circumstances correct as the event conveys a false impression of a reality which is in fact more complex and in order to understand it has to take into consideration the great diversity of the anti-war movements. Today I feel the representation has been obscured or understanding of what was really a very complex revolutionary process that was in full swing after February 1917 a process in which political developments can only be guessed at since it was broken by a shift to the Bolsheviks seizure of power. This was a clash of power that took place at the end of the February revolution, which was born in February 1917 and whose last spasms were the Krusenstern in March 1917. The soviets were then transformed into marching and executive units of government and the March

Party decisions, whilst the participation of the masses was progressively broken. In thousands of theatres of activity, instead, there was substituted just one such theatre that of the Party known to be the sole party which claimed to incarnate the people and to make history. The party presented itself as though it had made the revolution and, alone knew how to make it work. And so it soon banned as subversive all discourse apart from its own. Any dissenting opinion was held to be "counter-revolutionary" ("whoever is not with us is against us", as it was said).

October made it possible for a managerial team benefiting from the sympathy of part of the urban masses to place itself at the head of an organized movement and of new organs of power in order to try to guide the country along a predetermined track, in this way a "revolution from above" was initiated in which a decisive role was played by the directing organs of the Bolshevik Party.

The banning of other parties like the Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs) and the Menshevik Party, (which included many workers), the subordination of the trade unions to the Bolshevik Party and the way the latter functioned all progressively closed the door to any possibility of organized expression on the part of workers, peasants or intellectual authors.

Thus the power installed in October 1917 by the Bolsheviks, power which proclaimed itself the dictatorship of the proletariat, in reality was a dictatorship in the name of the proletariat and it was finally exercised over the working class itself. Lenin himself recognized this fact in many writings. Thus in 1919 he declared that the dictatorship of the proletariat in Soviet Russia corresponded to a government for the working people and not a government by the working people. He even added that this power was not "authoritarian".⁴ Although Lenin refrained from drawing such a conclusion, such phrases meant that the "dictatorship of the proletariat" is only a fiction. The latter represents an inverted form the real relationships which are those of a dictatorship exercised over the proletariat.

Such an inverted presentation of the real relationships of power has significance. On the one hand it constitutes the foundation both of Soviet Russia preserved as the country

the "dictatorship of the proletariat" and of the "Great October Socialist Revolution." On the other hand it dignified the sub-section of the Bolshevik Party to an elevated ideology which had the Party whatever its real relationship with the actual proletariat, assuming that it was the 'vanguard' of the latter. In this way the Bolshevik Party claimed a greater *legitimacy* which in some way was constitutive. This gave it a dispensation from giving an account of itself to the working class which was judged 'less advanced' than itself. Certainly the Party had to pay attention to who the workers were thinking, but with the aim of educating and guiding them and, if necessary, of punishing those who did not recognize its authority. Thus "workers' *as power* could be rigorously used against that class. As Lenin told L.D. Trotsky: "The dictatorship of the proletariat is exercised not only over the bourgeoisie but also over the political unaware or stubborn part of the proletariat and its partner the reformists. The reformists are shot."¹⁷

"Proletarian legitimacy" allowed the ruling power to co-exist with a true Soviet legitimacy while claiming the latter for itself whenever it considered it useful to do so. This Soviet legitimacy was, moreover, only an accessory; it was not a "founding legitimacy," as is remarkably emphasized in the analysis of Matt Ferro. The Bolshevik Party began at the time of the October insurrection by dispossessing of power the soviets and their Second Congress at the very moment when the Bolsheviks, were supposed to have substituted it with a communist power! Simultaneously, in its discourse the Bolshevik Party made October appear as the true image of what it itself regarded as a "socialist revolution."

But if one analyzes the political and social consequences whose development has been encouraged by this representation of the revolution, one concludes that the October insurrection brought to power a radicalized fraction of the intelligentsia who was supported by part of the working class, and claimed to speak in the name of the proletariat that which has entered history under the banner of socialist revolution as an essential to a "capitalist revolution" leading in the end to an expropriation of the direct producers.

In Volumes 1 and 2 of this study I had yet to arrive at this conclusion. I believed then that it was only progressive, through a series of "slides" and "ruptures," that the Soviet Union for itself locked into what I called "state capitalism," and that these "slides" and "ruptures" were a result above all of historical "involvement" of the need to face up to difficulties which the Bolshevik Party could not have overcame in any other way. Today I think—following the repetition of the same type of development in all those countries in which a directing party has taken Bolshevism as a guide for its actions—that one must ascribe a decisive historical role to certain concepts of Bolshevism. That is, the "historical mission of the proletariat and its party a party functioning as the treasury source of theoretical and political truth, a social mission which according to Lenin—is only State monopoly capital on which is made to serve the interests of the whole people."

Admittedly, the moulding of Bolshevik ideology is complex and contradictory, and one could quote other texts in opposition to those which assign to the revolution the goal of a generalized state wage-earning class—but in the final analysis what remains is the assimilation of socialism to state capitalism.

From October 1917 such concepts helped to orient the economic and social transformation toward a capitalist revolution. However up to 1929 this 'capitalist revolution' endeavored to leave a place for the peasant revolution, which seemed to promise an avenue for cooperatives. This prospect was abandoned at the end of the 1920s when new social and political conflicts were manifested leading to a 'second revolution,' the 'Sovnarkom' revolution' which pushed to extremes the expansion of exportative relationships.

The concept of 'capitalist revolution' formulated here should be distinguished from the traditional concept of 'bourgeois revolution.' It is used to characterize the process begun in October and relaunched and overtaken in 1929 to not simply in regard to the social forces which played a direct role in it but taking into account the social relationships which this revolution consolidated and helped in spite of (with the help) of phrases about socialist revolution.

The capitalist revolution which developed in Russia tended to promote the pre-capitalist forms of production in particular craft scale commercial production. But in 1920 most of the Bolshevik leaders envisaged a progressive and ~~gradual~~ elimination of these types of production. The ~~Soviet~~ government abandoned this prospect. Relying exclusively on one part of Bolshevism a complex and contradictory approach, it strove for the development of the most unbridled forms of capitalist production, for the most radical separation of the direct producers from their means of production and for the destruction of the forms of common business and organization which would allow these producers to resist exploitation.

In this way through a complex and bruising process the October revolution cleared the way for two successive revolutions one which was orientated towards a state capitalism which had a place for the peasantry and then one which after 1929 laid the foundations (in the name of socialism and under the direction of the Bolshevik Party) of an extreme form of capitalism. Finally, this second new Russia, imposed by the Socialist leadership, imposed on the Russian people exploitative relationships which enabled an exploitation through accumulation to be achieved over a certain period at the cost of unprecedented oppression.

Neither the October Revolution nor the 'October revolution' attacked capitalist exploitation what they did was to end the specific political forms of domination by means of a transformation of the juridical forms under which this capital exploitation operated. After October real power was more and more exercised by the party leadership and apparatus. The various factions which in course of time were imposed on the Party as much for objective reasons as for the leadership's decisions resulted in the Party apparatus becoming increasingly authoritarian in relation to its membership. It ended however in recruitment and the purging of those who did not sufficiently submit to it. In this way the new type Party really took shape during the 1930s.

For the Party leadership, the contradictions which put it in opposition to the workers, peasants, or cadres could be resolved positively only by the strengthening of its authority. In a

was the concentration of the working class required for of all the consolidation of its power. It concluded that only highly centralized economic and political organization would permit a sufficiently high growth of production and of living conditions. It believed at least in 1917 and at the beginning of the 1920s that the workers would thereby in the end gain the free time which they needed in order to participate actively in the management of public affairs — a participation which disappeared during the 1930s.

This version of the analysis of the October Revolution and its aftermath wants to recognize that the new aspect aspect of this revolution is a matter of aspirations and also of the level of image and ideology.

Nevertheless this "so-called" aspect of October has had and still has a counterrevolutionary effect. The myth of the USSR as a haven of socialism tends to survive in our own days despite the fact that that country has a particularly rapid reproduction and extension of a wage-earning class and a highly subordination of production to the limitations of capital accumulation and of surplus value. All this corresponds to an extreme form of capitalism and leads to a power which is militaristic and expansionist.

If this is far from being universal, recognized because of the forces of the strength of a foundational myth but also because complex and contradictory causes. Thus a large number of people desire socialism to be realized somewhere or else to therefore invest in the USSR an imaginary community — even for adherents of western capitalism and advocates of social change the identification of the USSR with socialism is highly convenient because it suggests that any attempt of a radical social emancipation would lead inevitably to the dictatorship of a single party and to an authoritarian and repressive regime which would freeze out the majority of especially traditional and peasant masses. However again in the effect of the foundational myth of October the right-wing Soviet Party and people had both the usual form of the anti-social character of the USSR and a very often the same contents and partly destructive re-interpretation of history. For how who except such a representative capital of the opposition can only take place in accordance with a mythical

the model of which is England and America. The Marxist "rupture" moreover holds this view even though it denies that the culmination of its development was represented by Germany and the so-called directed capitalism which that country experienced at the end of World War I. Concrete observation and historical analysis tend to produce a different view which recognises that there exist only specific ways of development both of production relationships and of productive forces under capitalism and that there is not only an Anglo-American way of capitalist development but also other ways which are French, Japanese, Russian and so on.

The 'decomposition' of the 'old social order' was especially spectacular in Russia from 1918 to 1920, and then from 1928 to 1931. Individuals who until then had a dominant place in the production and reproduction process or in the political order were effectively eliminated in wholesale fashion. But the transformations which resulted from this only upset the social relationships of domination and exploitation without making them disappear. It has been obscured by the elimination of the old holders of political and economic power and by the replacement of a strong, centralized executive power whose representatives spoke a radical language and whose gave the illusion that there had been a total break with the past and that an entirely new social order was being built. The October revolution was presented in the guise of a socialist revolution whereas what it did was open the way for a capitalistic revolution of a specific type. October is therefore the beginning of what can in effect be the Grand Finale of the 20th century.¹

Notes

Among many works I would particularly mention the important studies by Max FAGO *The Russian Revolution of February 1917* (London 1972) especially pp. 296-300; *Das November 1918* (October 1977 London 1978) especially pp. 296-300; *Le communisme russe et russe* (Paris 1981) especially pp. 19-28; 140-142-143; *Le siècle d'après le socialisme soviétique* (Paris 1980); I would also mention *Nous à Moscou* (appendix to *Histoire de Russie* (Paris 1980) especially pp. 104ff and *Histoire révolutionnaire de l'URSS* (Paris 1980). On a different plane in this same book *Le pouvoir ouvrier* (Paris 1980). On a different plane in this same book by Bernard Chavance should be mentioned *La capitale soviétique* (Paris 1981) 1986 as well as Claude Lefort's *L'avenir de la démocratie* (Paris 1981).

- 2 Making the effort to measure this gap one has to take seriously Marx's declaration in the foreword of his *Kritik des Hegelschen Staatsrechts*: 'One does not evaluate a revolutionary epoch according to its own ideas of itself.'
- 3 I have in this way had the benefit of very useful comments by Renée Coulter, Bernard Chavance, Yves Duroux, Sigrid Grosskopf, K.S. Karol, Alain Lipietz, Thierry Paquot, Rossana Rossanda, Jacques Sapir, Patrick Thivierge, Pauline Vanheekha, Eric Vigne, François Wahl, as well as many others too numerous to mention, including the participants in my seminars at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en sciences sociales.
- 4 For these terms see the first volume of this study
- 5 This description follows that of Claude Lefort in 'La question de la Révolution' (see *L'invention démocratique*, p. 189)
- 6 On this point see volume 1 of this study (n. 98) and Lenin's *Collected Works* (London, 1965) Vol 29 p. 183 and Vol 32, pp. 20-21, 24 and 48
- 7 See L.O. Froissard, 'Mon journal de voyage en Russie' in *L'International*, October 2 1921, quoted in F. Kupferman *Au pays des Soviets* (Paris, 1979), pp. 40-41
- 8 See Mario Petru, *Der Sowjet*, p. 186ff
- 9 Here it has to be admitted that, contrary to what I thought in 1974 those conceptions have had considerable historical consequences
- 10 Lenin's *Collected Works*, Vol 25. (Moscow, 1964 p. 382)
- 11 Vols 1 and 2 of this study began to move away from this illusion but were still affected by it.
- 12 These two volumes, devoted to the third period (1930-41) conclude our enquiry into the class struggles in the USSR. After 1941, in effect the foundations of the Stalinist system were firmly laid, in the USSR today they are still in the process of deterioration. The Khrushchev period deserves to be treated as a specific phenomenon and should not be reduced to a mere episode or digression.

PART 1

The peasantry expropriated

For most of the 1920s Soviet agriculture remained mainly 'private'. In 1927 'individual peasant farms' provided 12.4 percent of the marketed grain production, the workhouses (state farms) 5.7 percent and the kolkhozes (collective farms), 1.9 percent. In 1928 these two latter types of farm had less than three percent of the sown land and were worked by a still smaller proportion of the active population.¹ The concept then dominant of the NEP had led the Party and state to avoid giving real help to peasants wishing to adopt spontaneously the path of collective agriculture.²

Toward the end of the 1920s the poor supply of industrial products to the countryside tended to reduce the amount of agricultural produce on offer. The authorities reacted with a series of measures which led to the 'general crisis of the NEP'.³

The Party leadership reacted to 'the difficulties that then arose by conducting a frontal attack against the peasantry. The continuation of this attack resulted during several years in a radical upheaval of social relationships in the countryside and swept in quite new class relationships that were historically unprecedented and in no way corresponded to what the Party leaders had forecast at least overtly at the end of the 1920s.'

Notes

¹ See *Narodnoye khozyaistvo* p. 34 and p. 118. See also Vol. 3 of this work p. 25.

² See Vol. 3 of the present work, pp. 185ff.

³ See above pp. 101-128 and pp. 460-475

"The socialist transformation of agriculture" and the class struggles

To grasp the significance of what is officially termed the "socialist transformation of agriculture", it is first necessary to recall briefly some essential aspects of the agrarian structures toward the end of the 1920s and the way in which these structures tended to develop.

The existing social relationships toward the end of the NEP in Soviet agriculture resulted from the peasant revolution of 1917, the policies followed afterward by the authorities, and the repetition of peasant practices which by and large were communal and stemmed from the traditions of the *mir* and of the *skhod*.¹

The agriculture that had been "socialized" played only a minimal role, supplying only 33 percent of agricultural production.² Private agriculture therefore played a quite dominant role. Within the latter, it may be noted that the middle peasants were dominant in the countryside: they accounted for more than twothirds of the peasantry. Together with the poor peasants, they provided eight times more grain for the market than the rich peasants.³ Moreover, the proportion of middle peasants tended to increase especially through the entry into this category of part of the old poor peasantry.⁴ The situation of the middle peasantry, and part of the poor peasantry, was also strengthened by the development of traditional mutual aid practices, and by voluntary association in tens of thousands of simple production cooperatives.⁵ In these ways the

as much weight as those peasant-capitalists tended to give it. At a certain point the same thing happened with the political weight transmitted through the *akhet* which had not had received the same kind of procedure of the former which had.

In fact contrary to the official propaganda of the last time, no one most important themes are repeated by present-day Soviet propaganda. It was not at all a question of a rise in power of the rich peasants or the coming to a head of a threat that these bosses could have brought to bear simultaneously on middle and poor peasants and on coal supply for the towns. Nor was it a question of a genuine spontaneous aggrava-tion of the social contradictions inside the village. Of course these contradictions existed during NEP but the possibility now existed and the facts demonstrate this that these contradictions could have manifested themselves in a strengthening of the situation of the great majority of the peasants and in their voluntary entry into the cooperative system. It can be added that this has generally been overlooked because there has been confusion between the division of the peasant according to external economic criteria and its division into classes which depend on production and other relationships.

These two ideas should be borne in mind when seeking to cover the social forces which impelled collectivization. When seeking reasons for collectivization ending in the destruction of what had been gained from the peasant revolution - the exploitation of the peasantry and an upsurge of new exploitative relationships. In fact contrary to the official picture collectivization did not result from the struggle by poor and middle peasants more and more exploited and oppressed by the kulaks. It resulted from the intervention of social forces external to the village which exacerbated and made use of the internal contradictions within the village. These social forces were those of the Party which had become all powerful in the state. They led to a specific capitalist transformation of the Soviet countryside (when the latter was in no way developing into a peasant capitalism). The triumph of this rural capitalist revolution required that the peasants should be reduced to servitude and their resistance shattered.

to see here that there lies the true meaning of the six months of 'electrification'. Without understanding this one might be led to believe that these tragic events resulted from an insane狂妄的 attitude that brought long term ruin to Soviet agriculture and which in its absurd way switched the USSR into a chain of events full of noise and fury.⁶

To trace accurately the history of these events we must go back to 1928-29.⁷

I. The years 1928-29

In consequence of the policies adopted for agricultural prices and for deliveries of industrial products to the peasants (particularly of products which they needed to develop their production) 1927 ended in a fiasco over the procurement of cereals by the state (and also by the official cooperatives). The leadership of the Party decided at the beginning of 1928 to take urgent measures which were regarded as the only measures that were practicable.⁸ In accordance with these measures the peasants had to deliver to the state the grain which they held and for this they received a very low official price. If the peasants responded with a refusal, the authorities had recourse to exceptional measures,⁹ which in particular allowed them to act under Article 107 of the Penal Code of the RSFSR, that is, they could seize the assets of the peasant and confiscate them. These confiscations were carried out with the help of numerous units and of worker brigades sent from the towns. In principle these measures of coercion were only applied to the kulaks, but in fact they were applied to all peasants. Finally, to the whole peasantry who held the rural grain, these measures were carried out brutally especially after the spring of 1928 when famine began to be seriously felt. From that time the poor peasants, who more or less had upheld the previous measures during the winter months became hostile to such an extent that at the end of the spring almost all the peasants were clearly against the policy adopted for the villages. In the middle of June 1928 M I Frunze wrote in a letter addressed to the Central Committee: 'The village apart from a small section of the poor peasantry, is against us.'¹⁰

This event was also felt in the towns. The Soviet Union at the time experienced the most serious social and political crisis since the Kronstadt uprising. In July the Central Committee decided to annul the 'exceptional measures,' which it emphasized were 'un-porary,' and condemned those applications of them which had given rise to 'violation of revolutionary legality,' to illegal searches, and to administrative arbitrariness etc.¹²

Nevertheless, some months later, because of the 'insufficiency' of the tax-in-kind, exceptional measures were again taken with the application of coercion against the peasantry. Delivery quotas were imposed on the peasants. If they did not fulfil these the authorities levied heavy fines, which often even took the form of expropriation and expulsion from the village. In this way from the winter of 1928-29 there was a partial 'dekulakization' like the dekulakization which would follow this effected not only the rich peasants but also the middle peasants, and these measures in effect implied the abandonment of NEP. They were felt to be an attack on the peasantry, and shattered the sympathetic feelings which the village still retained for the government.

II. The reintroduction of compulsory deliveries and the first wave of collectivization (1929-30)

(a) *The frontal attack against the peasantry after the harvest of 1929*

While fixing quite ambitious but apparently realizable targets for the development of kolkhozes and sovkhozes the Seventeen Party Conference (April 23-29, 1929) made concessions to the poor and middle peasants, who were still regarded as the dominant people in the countryside. The Conference reiterated its condemnation of "violations of socialist legality."¹³

However just before the summer 1929 harvest, despite all the previous assurances, the government fixed compulsory deliveries similar to those of 'war communism.' Local authorities

themselves evaluated the main purposes of the struggle and the country's ability to reach production of 100 million poods by 1928. The peasants had to fulfil the long delayed plan, given the level at which the majority of these norms were set and this meant the continuation from the majority of the peasants of the results of their work in other words a brutal pressure on the peasants' spiritual consciousness. Further, the reward of the deliver, plan - the village councils in getting to be renamed by the Party, were given the right to inflict heavy taxes and to change the apportionment of the communists' dues even. In order to reduce the exploitation burdens that these levies imposed on them, the poor peasants managed to get the quota increased for the rich and better-off peasants. These quotas reached such levels that they could not be paid. Peasant based on this may had no choice to sell their lives and their equipment but also their savings, clothes, furniture and even household and farm buildings in order to purchase grain at from the market the grain that they had to deliver to the state. Some peasants were driven to steal, some others to reduce their savings and to divide part of them among their relatives or assets. In 1929 alone the number of houses destroyed by 25 million and of ones by 10 million. This was a continuation of part of the practices imposed on the rural population of the Party and state apparatus because the methods and political methods used at the time of the civil war in 1920 of the town areas and cities. At the wish of the authorities to get hold of the largest possible quantity of agricultural products and to weaken the peasant economy was evident, had over the desire to develop production of foodstuffs and to increase the level of agricultural production measures. The result of the new exploitative action has had more weight than economic considerations or the alliance with the peasantry.

(ii) The accelerating collectivization "wind" in the fall of 1929 and January 1930

At the top level of the Party opinion and among the leaders of the party there was a strong feeling of the need to end those who had decided to put an end to the NEP and to start a

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results of the peasant revolution by instituting new agricultural structures which would permit the maximum exploitation of rural society.

Although the Sixteenth Party Conference had adopted the "optimal" version of the Five-Year Plan and targets for socialization which seemed to be realizable seven months later things took quite a different turn. What happened was that at the Plenum which met November 10-17, the annual plan for 1929-30 was adopted.¹⁵ The targets of this plan were very high and no longer corresponded at all with those of the Five-Year Plan adopted several months earlier. Stalin had declared that the peasants were joining the kolkhozes as entire villages and even entire districts,¹⁶ and a new upward revision of the collectivization targets was made in accordance with the new spring plan for the countryside for spring 1930 (this plan was ratified December 23, 1929). This was not the end of the series of decisions of this nature, for a decision of the Central Committee of January 5, 1930 fixed socialization targets which were even higher. The table below shows the upward movement of targets which was to turn upside down the agrarian structures of the USSR.

Agricultural "socialization" targets
(socialized sown areas in millions of hectares)

1930 targets				
1933 targets of the April 1928 resolu- tion ¹⁷	Annual Plan	Decree of December 23, 1929 ¹⁸	Resolution of January 5 1930 ¹⁹	
Kolkhozes and sovkhozes	26	18.3	39.7	30 million ²⁰ (by spring 1930)
of which kolkhozes		15.0	50.0	

It may be noted that in December 1929 the targets fixed for 1933 had already been exceeded by the targets for 1930, and that the contrasts of "collectivization" doubled between November and December 1929. The resolution of January 1930 established "as a task the collectivization of the 47

majority of peasant households during the five-year period. Moreover it provided that by the fall of 1930 or, at the latest spring 1931, complete (*sploshnaya*) collectivization would be largely achieved in the main grain regions of the lower and middle Volga and in the North Caucasus and one year later, in the other grain regions.¹⁰

The resolution of January 5, 1930 established that in principle the *artel* would be the main form of collectivization¹¹ and it favored the formation of large kolkhozes.

Fixing targets in such precise figures for collectivization contradicted the principle of voluntary acceptance of the kolkhoz by the peasants. The contradiction became especially obvious when the Central Committee unblushingly at the same time warned Party organizations against any attempt to influence the collectivization movement by means of decrees from above.¹²

As things turned out the forced collectivization campaign was speeded up by repressive measures adopted under pretext of liquidating the kulaks as a class¹³ and by the application of various administrative measures.

(c) "Administrative measures" preparing and accompanying "collectivization from above"

From summer 1929 various administrative measures were taken having the effect of putting pressure on the peasantry. It is pressumed not only to increase the quantity of grain processed by the state¹⁴ it served also to induce the peasants to enter the kolkhozes and to accept that the latter would be of the size desired by the authorities.

As early as June 27, 1929 the Central Committee instructed the administration of the cooperatives, purchase sales and so on, to adapt itself to the demands of collectivization particularly by encouraging the establishment of big kolkhozes and even of giant kolkhozes.¹⁵ In practice this meant the destruction of the small and medium kolkhozes that the peasants had started and themselves directed¹⁶ and the imposition on the peasantry of the formation of large-scale kolkhozes to which it was usually hostile¹⁷ because it could not control their

management, this implied that the peasants were completely separated from their means of production.

In August 1928 the CC issued directives for the development of the system of contracts (*kontraktstoye*). This system made the supply of industrial products to the agricultural producers depend on the obligatory deliveries undertaken by the latter. Thus the agricultural producers undertook in advance to deliver definite quantities of agricultural products to the procurement organizations. These undertakings resulted from decisions taken by the peasant associations of the villages, decisions which were followed by contracts signed between the state and the associations. In reality, the latter took no decisions. They were placed in a situation where all they could do was "ratify proposals" made by the procurement organizations. However these "decisions," once they had been approved by the peasants, were imposed on every member of the peasant association. The procurement organizations could quite easily get their proposals ratified because a refusal to accept them would entail various sanctions, beginning with the reduction of supply of industrial products. The same sanctions were used against members of an association that did not fulfill "promises" that had been made.

From October 1929, the Council of Ministers stipulated that contracts should cover several years and the signatures of the members should in principle form the main guarantee of reliability, creating a new means of exerting pressure in favor of collectivization.

Parallel with the development of the contract system, centralized and complex administrative structures were organized. These had to facilitate the procurement of agricultural products and accelerate collectivization. Moreover they had to provide managerial staff for the kolkhozes. Thus for the management of the kolkhozes there was the district peasant kolkhoz union (districtsovkhоз) at the bottom, and at the top there were equivalent organizations for the regions and the federated republics.

From October 1929, another element of the kolkhozes' mass organizational structure, the *kolkhozentr*, became a central control-style organ in charge with the supply of equipment and tools to the kolkhozes, with which it agreed contracts and for whose

production it arranged the procurement, it also elaborated in association with Gosplan a plan for the development and the activities of the kolkhoz sector, and it also prepared the operating rules for the kolkhozes, etc.²⁴ This administrative structure left no place whatsoever for any initiatives of the kolkhozes and of the kolkhoz members, either in the realm of production and delivery plans or in the internal regulations of the kolkhozes.

During the summer of 1929 the existing system of machine and tractor stations (MTS) and tractor columns was united within the framework of a new central administration, the Traktorcentr.²⁵

In sum the decisions adopted during the second half of 1929 ended with the development of a variegated agriculture administration. The latter included, apart from the organizations already mentioned, offices entrusted with the commercial side of the different products, and others charged with the making of certain cultivation contracts and, finally the People's Commissariat for Agriculture (*Narkomzelen*) whose competence extended over the entire Soviet Union. This administrative structure was burdensome and difficult to coordinate and therefore the different organizations which it comprised were often in conflict with each other and gave contradictory directives to the kolkhozes and to the peasant associations. The total result of these measures was nothing less than constant pressure exercised on the peasants so as to increase the total procurement of products and the area of collectivized land.

This pressure took all kinds of forms (financial, commercial, technical (the peasants who did not cooperate were deprived of supplies, credits etc which were promised to them); there were also administrative, political, judicial and penal pressures).

Administrative and political pressures were exerted through the Party organization and through the local bureaucracy. At first they were presented simply as an activation of cadres entrusted with propaganda in favor of collectivization and of the procurement of produce. Thus from summer 1929 the villages received an increasing number of visits from Party organizers and propagandists. These cadres, arrived from the town, collected

together the assemblies and called on them to submit to the state its delivery plans and for the formation of kolkhozes. Then, it was made an effort to animate the rural society and to organize the poor peasants. In this way the great informers whom they developed originated mainly from elements external to the villages who were quite ignorant of agricultural and peasant problems.

Simultaneously there was a reinforcement of other means of pressure. For example those who seemed "in difficulty" to the current campaigns were easily accused of "counter activity". The penal sanctions which struck at such activities were intensified and the same thing happened with the sanctions for the non-delivery of the outputs of agricultural production envisaged by the *Kontraktariza*. The description "kuak activity" became more and more frequent. Often it amounted to the "paying off of accounts" between certain villagers, but it became one of the principle methods of advancing the procurement of products and accelerating collectivization.

At this stage the multiplication of penal measures played a decisive role. At the beginning of 1929 the peasants had to pay to the state a fine equal to five times the quantity of products which might in have been delivered to the state - which had not been so transferred. From June 1929 the non-delivery of products which should have been supplied was punished by prison sentences, i.e. confiscation of property or even by deportation. In principle the most severe punishments were to be applied only to kulaks but this principle was frequently violated and severe punishments were also applied to medium and even to poor peasants. Moreover, refusal to enter a kolkhoz was considered to be a "kuak activity" - counter-revolutionary and punished as such.

(d) The immediate results of these measures

In the short term the measures taken from the fall of 1928 had a positive effect on the progress of collectivization. The following shows this:

Percentage of collectivized households¹⁰

June 1, 1928	2.1	January 20, 1930	21.6
June 1, 1929	3.9	February 20, 1930	50
October 1929	4.1	March 1, 1930	59.3
January 1, 1930	15.5		

The 'progress' thus achieved developed in a chaotic and contradictory way because, contrary to the official claims of that period, the majority of peasants adhered to the kolkhoz unwillingly for fear of administrative, financial and commercial sanctions and above all by the fear justified of being classified as a kulak, of seeing their property confiscated or being deported or executed.¹¹

Recourse to repressive measures, arrests, executions and deportations, grew to such a scale in January and February 1930 that it engendered violent discontent among the peasants and even early stages of revolt. At the end of February the situation had seriously deteriorated. Stalin then decided to temporarily suspend the collectivization movement. On March 2 1930 (just as the procurement had achieved a record level), he published the article titled 'Gddy with success'.¹²

(a) *The truce of spring and summer 1930*

The publication of his article by Stalin marks a truce in the offensive for "collectivization". This truce was imposed by the necessity to restore conditions relatively favourable for the spring sowings otherwise there would have been famine in the land.

Stalin's article denounced the methods used for some months which he said could only discredit the idea of collectivization at one blow and were worthy of Sergeant Tibbles.¹³

It is not clear whether the Central Committee or the Politburo had been consulted about this article. In any case it disconcerted the local cadres because the latter had had every reason to believe that, in relying on the methods now condemned by Stalin, they were simply adhering to instructions from the Supreme Soviet cadres even believed that this article was fast and tried to prevent its distribution going as far as Moscow. It

from the peasants." The latter, conversely, received the article as a "charter of freedom."

The new direction indicated by Stalin in his article of March 2 was confirmed by a resolution of the CC of March 4, 1930. The CC described the "collectivization methods" condemned by Stalin as "deviations from the Party line" and blamed lower cadres responsible for these deviations. Investigations were then started with the aim of "correcting the mistakes" had been made. However, in spite of the condemnation of "mistaken methods" very few of the peasants who had been sentenced before March 1930 were "rehabilitated." In fact deportations continued, the staying at home, or the return of those who had been subject to unjust condemnations and whose treatment would have been too dangerous for the local cadre, who had been responsible for misdeeds, confusions and instructions. But these cadres, although "disavowed" by the Party leadership, usually retained their positions.

There was considerable discontent among the lower cadre. This can be traced in the press and in the Bolshevik Archives. Present-day Soviet historians also draw attention to this discontent. For example it is possible to read how the secretary of an important Party organization named Kharayevich, attacked in a letter of April 10, 1930) accusations leveled at the local cadre alone. He wrote:

We are receiving numerous complaints (from Party cadres) that they have been unmercifully treated as idots. Really, instructions should have been given to the central press so that while criticizing the deviations and the excesses which have been committed, it should not unduly injure solely the local officials."

Stalin therefore found it necessary to review once again the "collectivization methods"; thus took the form of an article published in *Pravda* of April 3, 1930 and entitled "A reply to the Bolshevik comrades." Here Stalin treats the "mistakes concerning the peasant question." He claims that what is at the root of these errors

is the mistaken way of treating the middle peasants. It is the violence used in the economic relationshp with the middle peasant. It is forgetting the fact that the economic alliance with the mass of middle peasants must be based not on measures of coercion but on an understanding with the middle peasant, and on the alliance with him.⁴⁰

Considerations like these characterize the directives issued during the first months of this year and they all have an underlying motivation. The latter is the fear of explosive discontent of the peasantry and the fear of seeing exasperated peasants neglect their work in the fields. Hence the slogan, "Proper organization of sowing - that is the task."⁴¹

As soon as pressure was relaxed on the peasants their fundamentally hostile attitude to "collectivization" showed itself quite openly. For example, the proportion of household collectivized diminished as can be seen from the following table.

Percentage of collectivized households

March 1, 1930	59.9	May 1930	28
March 10, 1930	54	June 1930	24
April 1930	27	October 1, 1930	21.7

In October 1930 the number of collectivized households reached its lowest level. Part of the peasants still remained in the kolkhozes were there because they had no other means of surviving since, following the expropriation and the liquidation of the "kulaks," the major share of the means of production in the villages was concentrated in the kolkhozes. Other peasants stayed in the "collective" farms because they feared that there would be another "change of line." The latter did occur, when the 1930 harvest was almost finished and when at the top of the Party the last remnants of resistance to a resumption of "collectivization from above" had been shattered.⁴² At this point collectivization resumed in a manner more systematic than in the preceding winter. This new collectivization continued steadily throughout the 1930s.

III. The course of the "Socialist Offensive" in the campaigns of the 1930s

There was a record harvest in 1930. In fact, in the spring of 1930, peasant discontent having been somewhat moderated thanks to decisions taken at the beginning of March the sowing campaign had been successful. Moreover, the weather had been favorable. For the authorities this harvest was particularly encouraging because it enabled them to more than double the grain collection, compared to 1928. These two successes persuaded the authorities that the situation in the countryside was henceforth "under control" and that the sowing campaign could be restarted.

Up to the end of 1930 the pressure put on the peasants increased only slightly thus on January 1, 1931 the percentage of households that had been collectivized was only 27.5 percent. The slowness of this growth was not in accordance with the 'objectives' of the authorities. The latter then decided to hurry things along. From the first months of 1931 there was a renewal of "pressure": the percentage of collectivized households grew sharply. By July 1, 1931 it reached 57.1 percent.⁴⁴

Henceforth it was 'methods' which were in question. The decision to carry out collectivization was irrevocable, whatever might be the cost for the peasants and for agricultural production. The authorities wanted to put the peasants in a strictly subordinate position and to have available structures which would permit them to impose the highest possible grain delivery.

Toward the end of the 1930s the aims that the authorities pursued in this manner were to all intents and purposes achieved. Consequently, the official history of the Party can proclaim the dazzling victory of socialism.⁴⁵

The following official figures illustrate this victory. In 1939 the 'individual peasants' were only 3.1 percent of the rural population. At the same period there were 81.4 million kolkhozniiks (compared to 2.3 millions in 1928); the number of people belonging to the families of state farm workers or MTS workers was around 8 million, or 7 percent of the rural population.⁴⁶

Thus the millions of peasants (living in conditions of great inequality) and the tens of thousands of genuine cooperative members who were to exist at the end of the 1920s were replaced by kolkhozniks and by the wage earners of the state farms and MTS.

The official comment on these figures affirms that during the 1920s a "new world" had been born in the Soviet countryside. This is undeniable. But what was this "new world"? This question cannot be answered without examining more closely the conditions in which it was born, the social relationships on which it was built and the economic conditions in which it functioned.

IV. Collectivization and mass repression

The "collectivization campaign" (of winter 1929-30) was used as a "model" for the later collectivization campaign in spite of the "reprimand" and the "calls to order" addressed to the base and local cadres after the publication of Stalin's article and the decisions of the Central Committee of March and April 1930. The enquiries that were opened at that time gave a quite good picture of the methods used for collectivization, but there is only partial knowledge of their findings. The latter are mostly accessible through certain statements made by the authorities and some articles which are based on a small portion of archival documents.

Nevertheless what is known is enough to reveal the scale of the anti-peasant repression and its mainly blind and arbitrary character. Numerous executions and expropriations were carried out under pretexts that were absurd and lacking any logical base. Quite a few operations had the effect of embarrassing local cadres or satisfying quarrels. The superior authorities usually let these things happen or even encouraged them because (as these operations (even when they caused violent local reactions) did meet the main demand they instilled terror and paralysed the peasants.

The Ukraine was one of the republics where the anti-peasant repression connected with "collectivization" and with pseudo

"dekulakization" was most severe. In certain regions of the Donets up to 50 percent of peasant households were dekulakized in 1930. This proportion is at least five times greater than the number of households which up to then had been officially considered as "kulaks." This clearly means that the majority of those who were struck in no way belonged to that social group. Moreover, numerous laws (not one shown) that any occurrence was likely to become a pretext for dekulakization. For example, simple peasant brawls were described by the courts as "terroristic acts" (terrorism) and were categorized among counter-revolutionary activities which could carry the death penalty.¹⁷

Thus, in the region of the giant kolkhoz which was called "anti," it is known that of the 1,200 households "dekulakized" in 1930, 400 were later officially recognized as *serednyaki* ("the peasant") households. In one Ukrainian village about 85 percent of the "dekulakized" households (mainly condemned to deportation) were later released as *serednyaki*. In principle such deportees, if they survived, were authorized to return to their village; in reality this authorization often had no effect.

Investigations show that at the beginning of 1930 in many cases, *serednyaki* were dekulakized under false pretenses, perhaps because they had sold a cow some months earlier, or even hay.¹⁸

At the beginning of 1930 the anti-peasant repression was so intense that the railways were overloaded with trains of deportees, of which many died en route. The peasants called these trains "death trains." They carried away entire families and quite often women and children whose husbands and fathers had been executed as "counter revolutionaries." The number of such trains was so great that it was estimated, as was officially admitted, a burden which is beyond the resources of the State.¹⁹ The Politburo then decided to allocate by quota to the different regions the means of transport for this purpose.²⁰

The publication of Stalin's article of March 2, 1930 did not change the lot of hundreds of thousands of expropriated peasants they remained attached to temporary camps where many perished. The expropriations and deportations which followed the resumption of "collectivization" of the winter of 1930-31

henceforward followed without any real interruption the deportation of those expropriated in the winter of 1929-30. Hence the mounting narration of 'death trains,' about which A. I. Shtern wrote in 1930:

Several times during the spring and summer I saw these echelons moving along the railroad - a doleful sight, men, women and children uprooted.¹

Another witness of this repression and its results which continued well beyond 1930 and 1931, was V. Segev:

Trainloads of deported peasants left for the icy north the forests, the steppes, the deserts. There were whole populations denuded of everything the old folk starved to death in mid-journey, newborn babies were buried on the banks of the roadside and each wilderness had its crop of little crosses at boughs and white wind. Other populations, dragging all their meagre possessions on wagons, rushed towards the frontiers of Poland, Rumania and China and crossed them by no means intact, to be sure in spite of the machine guns.²

Becoming a kolkhoznik did not shelter a peasant from deportation as a kulak. Not only could his past be at any time interpreted to give cause for sentencing but his current attitude could also be taken as a 'sign' that he remained a 'kulak.' He therefore lived under the constant threat of being condemned. Such condemnations were not rare, especially those which punished 'lack of respect' for the collective property.

In fact the growing demands of the state in the matter of grain deliveries, and the distrust felt by the majority of the Party cadre and by the Party leaders towards those peasants led to the authorities 'harassing' the kolkhozniiks (denounced kolkhoznikov), this term being used in July 1931 by Agricultural Cultural Commissar, Yakovlev. The latter protested against what he called 'mass anti-kolkhoz actions' and declared that the members of kolkhozes had become 'an object of unadulterated arbitrariness' (*pounyi preizvol*).³

Prisons by several Party leaders (who would be purged later) did not help. The brutality and the arbitrariness compensated. As for the kulakovs they cooperated less and less as their feeling that the claimed collectivization was a nationalization or expropriation grew stronger.¹

Sentences were pronounced also for what might be called acts of negligence: the CC demanded such sentences without any mitigating.² The concept of negligence was all-embracing; it included even what the authorities described as "responsible indifference" categorized as sabotage. Yet part of this alleged sabotage was nothing but the refusal of kulakovs to obey initial directives coming from a "higher" who overrode the kulakovs in deciding where and when, "now and in laying absurd orders like 'sow on top of the snow'" ("to save time").³

Thus the reasons for arresting and deporting peasants carrying out these repressions were numerous. Official figures minimized the scale of these measures. Thus the Party history published in 1962 admits that there were a little more than 240,000 families deported,⁴ or more than 1,200,000 persons, but has "barely" covered the period from 1930 to the end of 1932 in the regions of complete collectivization.

The measures introduced from the end of 1930 were analogous to those taken a little earlier (arrests, deportations) but they were applied with more vigor in the name of collectivization. Sentences and imprisonments reflect the not only of the genuine rich peasants but also of any peasant suspected or accused to ten at a basis of unverified denunciations of probable sympathy and converted as a "kulakov".⁵ The mass collectivization was thus imposed while any resistance that were left were severely punished. Deportation was the most common punishment but when many peasants protested (K.P.S.), what was authorized to execute without trial and some peasants on the spot to enclose the human cattle yards.⁶

The Smolensk Archives contain numerous reports which give some idea of the scale and brutality of the repression as well as the fear which it exerted not only in the capitals but also in the towns. Many workers still had their farms in the villages.

The fear was such that passively developing whatever previously had been of the facilities were needed to execute one arrested man in 1931 one militia man could execute a whole group of prisoners for many arrests seemed almost a relief compared with the unashamed waiting for it before farm lads were arrested including children.¹⁴ Some parents even preferred to put their older children rather than see them die in this way.

What developed was a veritable anti-peasant war. It culminated in 1932-34 when the combination of bad harvests massive requisitions of cereals and the reduction to a minimum of the amount of grain sent back to the hungry villagers condemned millions of peasants to death from famine or under-nourishment. The continuance at any price of the massive requisitions of food products by the state organizations entrusted with the procurements and the refusal to give up the imports dictated by famine can be partly explained by the wish to expand production to permit the purchase of industrial equipment abroad and by the priority promised for the towns food supply.

The Webbs great admirers of the collectivization admitted in such conditions "justified" the "sentences of death by famine" in the following words:

Collective farms which had wilfully neglected or refused to till their land were sternly rebuked and when they found themselves without food so as not to encourage further resistance and in some of the worst cases the inhabitants of whole districts in order to save them from starvation were summarily removed from the land they had neglected or refused to cultivate and deported elsewhere to do the abhorring work of any sort for their maintenance.¹⁵

The repression was supposed to teach the kolkhoziks the strictness. Thus a member of the Co-Chairman's delegation to the Seventeenth Party Conference (Buryatia 1 February 1932), that they "were not sufficiently honest in regard to strictness".

In order to teach the kolkhoziks to be upright the Co-Chairman called for punishment without indulgence for any refusal to

deliver grain." The grain collection campaign became a test of strength or as Kaganovich said "the traditions of our strength or weakness and of the strength and weakness of our men in... Any indulgence of lower cadres towards the peasants for example "indulgences which cadres might demonstrate by taking for a reduction of procurements imposed on peasants affected by famine" was considered as and given to the enemy and was punished as such.

So as to permit the "punishment" of the peasants there had to be further development of the repressive mechanism, promulgation of new laws, and the extended interpretation of those laws already in force.

Thus the law of August 7 1932 (which the peasants called the law of '73) was promulgated to enlarge the repressive means. It allowed for example sentences of six years of deportation for the gathering of ears of corn by too hungry. Tens of thousands of peasants, including children were deported by virtue of this law. These sentences were in addition to arbitrary measures imposed on the spot by different commissars. They were also in addition to the increasingly numerous sentences pronounced by virtue of Article 58 of the Penal Code of the RSFSR. Interpreting this article in an all embracing way tribunals attributed bad harvests, the painful state of market, lack of equipment, etc. to wreckers who were arrested, tried, deported or drowned in camps. The duration of these sentences could be ten years or more.¹²

The character of the anti-peasant war of the 1932-34 famine was also shown in an exchange of letters between Stalin and the Soviet representative Shchukin. In April 16 1933 the latter wrote to Stalin to protest against the revolting acts committed against peasants and which he believed (or pretended to believe) were the results of local excesses which had the result of depriving the peasants of grain and led to mass arrests in addition to arrest of Party members.¹³ In his reply (only published 17 years later) Stalin admitted that "excesses might have been perpetrated, but he claimed that they were only of minor importance because he said:

The honorable cultivators of your region and not only of your region, indulged in sabotage and were

government to capture the workers and the Red Army to gain the fact that the sabotage was aimed and apparently without violence. There was a shout down but due to the fact that the Soviet authorities were fighting it as a civil war against Soviet power.¹⁶

In a conversation between Stalin and Comintern in the latter's office, the General Secretary discussed the example for co-operation with the most hostile participants in the war against Nazi Germany.

Toward the end of 1933 the pressure bearing on the peasants seemed to moderate somewhat but this did not affect the pace of the liquidation. The same pressure continued in 1934, though continued to decline. Soviet pressure on the kolkhozniks.

The number of peasant victims of the regime of collectivization increased. But sometimes it became far more violent. Thus the Soviet demographer I. Danis claims that the execution of the Second Five Year Plan was at the expense of several million people died in 1933.

The average increase of mortality in 1932-34 was due both to the spring ploughing peasants who stayed in their old land after the collectivization which struck especially deep. Due to the example of the neighbouring regions, especially those which were relatively free. In general it can be noted that the peasants during the first five years than on the beginning of the second. But along with the planned were reported cases of mass cannibalism. These processes of a large scale have also been reported with sufficient evidence. The number of victims implicitly suggested by Danis already up to 1931. After that a similar number increased sharply and also the reported cases increased sharply.

The preferred line of the historical process which has not been described in broad will be the class struggle and its apogee of revolution. The latter manifested itself in the struggle the gains of the peasant revolution of 1917. It was the class struggle of the Party and of the state officials vs the triumph of the capitalist restoration demanded the conversion of peasants working as small independent producers. In 1932

to what Marx had already written about "primitive accumulation" (which simply was repeated here just as it was repeated in colonial countries when the bourgeois imperialists proceeded to the expropriation of the villagers in favor of "the development of capitalism"):

Its annihilation, the transformation of the individualized and scattered means of production into socially concentrated ones, of the private property of the many into the huge property of the few, the expropriation of the great mass of the people from the soil, from the means of subsistence, and from the means of labour, this fearful and painful expropriation of the mass of the people forms the prelude to the history of capital. It comprises a series of forcible methods.²³

The expropriation of the peasants which took place in the USSR through the 1930s had obviously nothing in common, despite all the talk about "socialist construction," with what Marx called "the negation of private capitalist property which according to him was to reestablish not private property but individual property based on the acquisitions of the capitalist era, cooperation, and the communal possession of land and the means of production produced by work itself."²⁴

Notes

1. The *mir* was the village commune collectively owning the land. The *obshchina* was the peasant association.
2. See *Konkunkturji byuleten zhurnala mirovogo ekonomika i politiki*, No. 10, 1937.
3. See Vol. 2 of the present work, pp. 82-83.
4. See above, p. 87.
5. See above, p. 89.
6. Interestingly enough this happened just as Lenin had envisaged it in 1917 at a time when he defined the obshchinas as a local organization of anti-imperialist forces. See *The Agrarian Question in the Russian Revolution* and his quotation from this piece in S. Gorkovskij, *I Alians na drevneje poymeniiu* (KSS 1921-1928) (Paris 1976). The "warred" the Soviet leaders.

- * A much detailed analysis of what happened at this time in the Soviet countryside has been given in Vol. 2 of this work, pp. 97-126. The reader may refer to this. Here we are looking at only those aspects which illuminate the way in which rural forces external to the village forces present in the leading Party made use of the peasant's internal contradictions in order to subordinate him in their exploitative relationships.
- 8. Pravda, March 11 1928.
- 9. See Vol. 2 of this work, p. 101.
- 10. Quoted in R. Löwenthal, *Wirtschaftspolitik der Sowjetunion 1917-1945*, Frankfurt 1978, p. 172.
- 11. See above, p. 174.
- 12. See KPSS [1953], Vol. 2, p. 9 FF respectively p. 201.
- 13. See above, pp. 456FF.
- 14. In A. Shishkov, *Zemel'nye problemy i gosudarstvennoye upravleniye v 1928-1932 gg.* (Moscow 1936) pp. 61-62 R. Beermann, *The Grain Problem and Anti-Speculation Laws*, Soviet Studies No. 19 1967 pp. 124-24 R. Löwenthal, *Sozialgeschichte* pp. 174-76.
- 15. KPSS [1953], Vol. 2, pp. 500FF.
- 16. Pravda, November 7 1929.
- 17. KPSS [1953], Vol. 2, p. 451.
- 18. See above p. 50⁷. According to these targets the sown area of the countryside was to double in one year. They had been 1.8 million hectares in 1929. From 1930 socialist agriculture was to provide 50 percent of the grain distributed outside the villages.
- 19. See above, p. 345.
- 20. See KPSS [1953], Vol. 2, pp. 544FF.
- 21. For the types of collectivization see Vol. 2 of this work, p. 494 note 104.
- 22. On this point see Vol. 2 of this work pp. 464-66. Also Stalin, *Leningrad* London 1940 pp. 328-32. We return to the repression connected with collectivization in the last section of this chapter.
- 23. See above.
- 24. KSNKh, p. 183 and p. 184.
- 25. A more detailed reconstruction of what was actually occurring can be found in *An Economic History of the USSR* (London 1976) p. 72.
- 26. While up to 1927 no collective farms, partnerships or peasants were forced to join, 0.5-1 families and covering 50-80 hectares in 1927 they attempted to manage 25 families. These peasant families went in for joint householding covering between 100 and 200 households and growing up hundreds of families. On this point see the document in Materials for Soviet Work Vol. 3 (1927 Moscow 1957 and 1957) *Pravosudie i sotsializm v sovetskoi ekonomike*, p. 55-56 (1926-1927 Moscow 1950 especially pp. 24-25). Both M. Lewin, *Russian Peasant and Soviet Power* (London 1961 1963) pp. 476-79 which also quotes V. Ilich, *On the Liquidation of富农* (1928), *Selected Works* (Moscow 1963; new edition) pp. 20-31, 175-76.
- 27. Some 100,000 kulaks were deported to Central Asia during 1937-38 and 1939.
- 28. M. Lewin, *Russian Peasant*, p. 274 and p. 408.

- 29 See above p. 410.
- 30 See M. Lewin, *Russian Peasant pp. 410 and 514; P. Zaleck, Planification dans le domaine des fluctuations économiques en URSS (Paris, 1974), p. 100 ("Bettelheim, La Planification soviétique, (Paris, 1945), p. 33). References to the various Soviet sources used can be found in these books. The percentages quoted here correspond to orders of size and not to an absolute measure. The fact that the Figures include a first decimal digit should not be taken as evidence of precision. Calculations later made with archival material show that the statistics of the period are apparently acceptable with the qualification that different regions where figures make up these documents did not stick always to a rigid definition of "households collectivized".*
31. See Vol. 2 of this work, pp. 461ff.
32. State procurements for grain rose to 16.1 and 22.1 million tons (i.e. 1929 and 1930) against 10.4 million in 1928. See Yu A. Mostov, *Zemstvenye problemy v sobytiyakh kolkhozizatsii na tlu Rossii i v SSSR* (Moscow 1983), p. 271.
33. *Pravda*, March 2 1930 and J. Stalin, *Leningrad*, pp. 333-38.
34. Stalin, *Leningrad*, p. 336. Przhibayev is an old dictatorial sergeant in one of Chekhov's stories.
35. Taylor File 374, ref. 9 doc 4167 and 12 quoted by V. Yel'tsevskii, "Reports appear at collectivisation," in *Recherches Internationales à la fin des années du marxisme*, No. 4, 1975, p. 57.
36. This term was used by A. L. Strong in *The Stalin Era*, New York 1949, p. 39.
37. KPSS (1953), pp. 54ff.
38. These ex-bolsheviks, seized by the German army when it occupied the city of Smolensk, were later captured by the U.S. Army and can be consulted in the U.S.A. Marie Faussard made a partial study of them which he published in his book *American Under Soviet Rule* (New York 1954). Cf. note 30 above. See also Vol. 2 of this present work.
39. VI, No. 3, 1965, p. 25.
40. Stalin, *Leningrad*, p. 339.
41. Stalin, Works, Vol. 12 234.
42. See note 30 above.
43. The right of the Party suffered new defeats in 1931 following the XXI Congress Party (Congress (June 26-July 13). Tukhachevsky was excluded from Politburo. However the same Congress again re-elected Bukharin to the O.C. On November 19 1930 Bukharin capitulated (see his speech on *Pravda* of November 20). Although this capitulation was considered "mild", it gave the signal for the suspension of all attempts at centralized collectivization from above. Those who continued to make such attempts were then hit hard (See G. Cohen, *Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revival* (New York 1974), p. 350).
44. See note 30 above.
45. History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) 1917-1929, p. 319.

- 40 The figures given for 1938 are those of A. Arutyunyan. Soviet rural areas have had slight increases since 1928. *Mirnaya* 1971, p. 39 note 4. For 1938 see N. Svetlov of L. A. Lewis p. 407. For the various changes in the Soviet countryside, see also R. Korbly, *La Société soviétique contemporaine*, Paris 1972, p. 10.
- 41 See M. Lewin, "L'Etat et les classes" written on "RSS 1929-1933" in *Archives de la recherche sur la culture soviétique* (Moscow 1976) which quotes in particular, *Sudostavia pressibza*, No. 7, 1931.
- 42 See the article by A. Arutyunyan "Social events and the liquidation of the kulaks as a class," in *Politicheskii*, No. 6, 1930.
- 43 See "Report to Politburo" No. 3, 1930, p. 34.
- 44 See M. Lewin, *Russian Peasant*, p. 506.
- 45 See A. L. Strong, *The Soviet Landless Peasant* (New York 1931), p. 38.
- 46 George Gershwin, *Autumn of a Revolutionary Year* (1931) (London 1962), p. 147.
- 47 A. Ya. Tikhonov, "Peasant organizations, particularly the kolkhoz komsomol," Moscow 1931, quoted by M. Lewin in "L'Etat et les classes" loc. cit. p. 12 n. 10.
- 48 The expression "class struggle among the people" was often used by a peasant delegate to the Sixteenth Congress of Soviets to emphasize that a peasant preserving the property of the results of their labor
- 49 PC, No. 3, 1933, p. 52.
- 50 Stalin in effect had said that the kolkhoz had experience and it was necessary to make decisions without them. He even agreed that article "That is how Stalin wants to give the order to pass on top of the cows" was there to offend those who refused. See D. Kurshev, "George Mikhailevich Krav (Moscow, 1964), pp. 146-47, 376.
- 51 *Izvestiya RKP(b)* (Moscow and Leningrad 1930), p. 191.
- 52 Estimate by M. Lewin in *Russian Peasant*, p. 507.
- 53 Lettishly put below see Vol. I of this work, p. 21.
- 54 See A. Gide, *The Russian Exodus* (London 1939), p. 90.
- 55 See the documents registered under V.A.P. 44 in the Smolensk Archives quoted by M. Palmed in *Sovietland*, p. 250.
- 56 See especially on this subject A. Gide, *The Russian Exodus*, p. 111.
- 57 S. and B. Weber, *Forest Colonization. A New Form of Peasant?* (London 1939) Vol. 1, p. 270.
- 58 *Sosobyazhnye dokumenty LKP(b)* (Moscow 1932), p. 276 quoted by M. Lewin in "Society and the Stalinist State in the Period of the First Five-Year Plans," *Social History* May 1970, p. 163.
- 59 PC No. 3, 1933, p. 63 quoted after M. Lewin, "Society and the Stalinist State," p. 264.
- 60 The text of this Article 90 figures in the Press Laws of the RSFSR published in 1926. It is drawn to no vague a conclusion that it allows a more wide interpretation of inciting evidence in the Article. The text of Article 90 can be found in R. Campbell, *The Great Terror* (London 1968), p. 15. The first volume of A. Vrabel's *Pravda i tsarstvo* (Prague 1926) gives good examples of how widely this Article could be interpreted. Reading parts and sections of this volume this Article would be struck hard. Reading parts and sections of later works by this Author it would be struck hard. Reading parts and sections of A. Vrabel's *Pravda i tsarstvo* (Prague 1926) will underline more. (Moscow, 1934).

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- 67 Extracts from the letter are in V P Danilov, *Otkriti i sluchi kolektivizatsii sovetskogo khozyaistva v SSSR*, p. 55
- 68 Pravda, March 10, 1963 and also Danilov, Octoekl p. 58
- 69 There are traces of other protests apart from Sholokhov's. For example there was a protest by R Terekhov Secretary of the Ukrainian Party which describes the dramatic rural situation in that republic. In Pravda of May 26, 1948 the addressee of this letter, Stalin, describes its author as a story teller. Writers and eyewitnesses have described the situation of deserted villages, with houses having their windows boarded up and material abandoned in the fields (See the unpublished memoirs of A E Kostarin, quoted by R Medvedev in his *Last History Judge* (London 1972), p. 95.
- 70 W S Churchill, *The Second World War* Vol 4, London, 1951 p. 44
The conversation went as follows.
". . . have the stresses of the war been as bad to you personally as carrying through the policy of the Collective Farms?"
"Oh, no," he said, "the Collective Farm policy was a terrible struggle."
". . . you were not dealing with a few score thousands of aristocrats or big landowners, but with millions of small men."
"Ten millions," he said, holding up his hands. It was fearful. Four years it lasted..."
- 71 B.C. Urliana, *Voiny i narodnoe seleniye Evropy*, (Moscow, 1960) Also the same author's contribution to the journal *Naselennye i narodnoe blagosostoyaniye*, (Moscow, 1968), quoted by Maksudov, *Portes ouvertes par la population de l'URSS 1918-1958*, in *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, July-September, 1977, p. 250.
- 72 See M. Lewin, *Russian Peasants*, p. 508
- 73 K. Marx, *Capital* (1891, Swan Sonnenschein edition, London 1887-88, Marx's Italics)
- 74 K. Marx, *Das Kapital* (1933 Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute edition Vienna) p. 803, Marx's Italics.

• Socialist" agriculture in the 1930s

ACCORDING to the official description, Soviet agriculture in the late 1930s comprised essentially three types of "socialist" production units:¹ sovkhozes (or state farms), MTS (machine and tractor stations) and kolkhozes (or collective farms²). The first two forms of agricultural activity were supposed to have a "superior" character compared with the kolkhozes, because they were directly tied with the state.³

This categorization does not tell us much about the real social relationships in which the direct producers were placed. Nevertheless, it permits a distinction between the wage-earners of the sovkhozes and the MTS who were in a situation similar to that of industrial workers (see Part Two of this volume) and the kolkhozniks. The situation of these latter requires a specific analysis, which brings into discussion a kolkhoz system whose reality may be contrasted with the fiction of official announcements. This contrast needs to be clarified before proceeding to an analysis in greater detail of the economic effects of the "socialization" of agriculture and of its consequences for class relationships.

1. The kolkhoz as fiction and as reality

Official discussion repeated endlessly the image of a certain fictitious kolkhoz,⁴ and this fiction developed in the areas of

police law and economists 'to say nothing about the
and novels conform up to the standards of "socialist literature".

In this fiction, the kolkhoz was 'the result of a process of
voluntary membership' on the part of the peasants who, with
the help of the state, spontaneously and *en masse* entered
the path of collective agriculture. From this there resulted the
birth of 'socialized cooperatives' which had the word 'instead
of the *artel*' (one of the traditional Russian forms of produc-
tion cooperation). The latter had at its collective disposal all
'agricultural equipment, livestock, seedstocks, forage for the
collective livestock, and the working premises needed for the
proper operation of the collective husbandry.' Its manage-
ment was entrusted to the general assembly of the kolkhoz, while
the central administration was entrusted to an elected
chairman and controlled by the same general assembly. For
the principle cropping operations, the kolkhozes became
from the cooperation of the MTS in which was centralized
the main agriculture, equipment. The incomes covered by the
kolkhozes by virtue of 'collective exploitation' depended
solely on their labor.⁴

From 1937 the Party press, Soviet films etc. proclaimed the
'brilliant victory of socialism' in agriculture the in state
the taxes gathered from and generously provided with funds
and agricultural machines,' and with the field workers
in unprecedented prosperity.

The reality was quite different and much more complicated.
We already know what voluntary adhesion of the peasants
to the collective farms many means, and we know about the
repression which tortured the peasants during the course of
collectivization and afterward, owing to subject the peasants
to the 'discipline' that the system required. However to grasp
the reality of socialist agriculture something must be said
about the economic effects of the agricultural transformation -
the expropriation and of its impact on the living conditions
of the rural masses and about something about the inter and intra-
relationships of the kolkhoz and its subordination to the demands
of accumulation by the state. It is only after doing all this that
one can attempt to describe the kolkhoz system and the role
which it played in the total picture of economic and social
relationships that developed during the 1930s.

II. The economic effects of the "socialization" of agriculture

The economic effects of the 'socialization' of agriculture can be studied at different levels. Here, we shall mainly limit ourselves to data relating to production, the quotas placed on agriculture (of the latter were made possible by the new agrarian structures) and figures relating to the living conditions of the kolkhozniks, who henceforth represented the great mass of rural workers.

(a) The crisis in agricultural production and stock breeding

The transformation of agrarian structures did not bring about the vast increase of harvests and livestock which the Party had expected. On the contrary, it was accompanied universally by a crisis in agricultural production. This crisis which ended not in the 1930s but continued rather longer did not affect different types of agricultural production in the same way. Certain branches, particularly lucky, were even untouched, but it struck the essential branches and especially the all-important grain production. Given the decisive role of the latter we must give some indications of its development during the 1930s.⁶ These figures cover all forms of agriculture both 'socialized' and non-socialized.⁷

In 1930 (the year when sowing took place after the pressure for collectivization was relaxed) the gross grain harvest rose to 77.1 million tons.⁸ After that date the harvest collapsed in an almost continuous curve up to the middle of the 1930s. The worst harvest was that of 1936. The following table can be composed:

Grain Production
(millions of tons)⁹

1930	77.1
1931	58.1
1932	67.0
1933	67.1
1934	67.3

The expropriation from above, which was intended to go forward in the grain production of the USSR, therefore, did manage to enable the household results to be maintained, quite the contrary. For other food crops the development of the situation was a little less bad but was far from compensating for the grain crisis.

Livestock production also went into deep decline. The index of this production (100 in 1913) had reached 137 in 1928 and then dropped to 106.10 (5 in 1931) and recovered only to 120 and 114 in 1938 and 1940 respectively.¹²

The drop in animal production was at first a result of the mass slaughter of livestock, in which almost all the peasants participated between 1928 and 1930, procurements and collectivization from above being regarded as virtual expropriation. The destruction of livestock continued up to 1933. Taking just the figures for the by-line population, the latter fell from 70.5 million in 1928 to 52.5 million in 1930. It reached a trough in 1933—54 million—and then recovered slightly in 1934 (42.4 million). In 1946 this figure was still only 50.9 million—very much below that of 1928. The latter figure would only be regained well after the war.

The situation was no better for other live stock raising. The reduction of the number of cows implied a reduction in the equine tractive force which was all the more serious because the number of horses fell equally, dropping from 38.4 million head in 1928 to 7 or 8 million at the end of the thirties. The result of all this livestock had unfavorable repercussions on the availability of natural fertilizer available for agriculture.

The fall in livestock was quite rapidly compensated by the investment effort made in means of production originating from the means which replaced what had been destroyed but especially in 1930 the tractive power available to agriculture greatly increased thanks to mechanization that of 1928¹³ and this improvement continued after 1935. In the same way the production of mineral fertilizers rose quite considerably in the second half of the 1930s. This increase in the material factors of production put at the disposal of the country's fields was not enough to prevent the agricultural crisis continuing in the second half of the 1930s.

In certain cases the decisive factor in this crisis was the human factor: the peasant resistance to collectivization and to communism; or again the peasant's fear of production from which comes the reorganization which the peasant classes did not expect. This meant that faced itself in particular by the tenancy to work collectively it was on the collective land and to carry out willingly the required tasks.¹⁵

The resistance at first active and then above all passive was accompanied by a reduction of the standard of living in the countryside. The effects of the resistance were aggravated by the physical enslavement of the peasantry which was deliberately abandoned to famine and frost which were to maintain millions of men in their prime either to go to work voluntarily in industry hoping to increase their incomes or to be deported into inhospitable regions where most often they were used in the timber industry, the mines, at big construction sites.

On March 1931 at the Eleventh Congress of Soviets, Stalin commented the behavior of the kulaks and the rightists in general: according to him, the kulaks had got up at 6 o'clock in the morning even in peak periods then chatted with their neighbors without burning just when they were ready to leave for the field for the peasant break fast. During working hours work was done negligently, ground sowing was done hurriedly and left the soil in a bad state which could not place hastily at harvest time the grain which had been harvested that it fell from the carts and stayed mixed upon the straw. The straw stains deeply disturbed the working of collective agriculture. It appears who the investment made by the state to increase agricultural production led to such poor results.

The seriousness of the agricultural crisis following the invasion from above does not justify the conclusion that the latter was an stroke for such a consolidated world event. The logic which had inspired collectivization in fact from the authorities point of view, the socialization of agriculture was the one way leading to the concentration of their grip on society by reducing to a minimum (in the use of violence by famine, and by the disorganization of the peasantry) the capacity for organized resistance by the peasants in the demands

of our civilization. It made it possible to very much increase the appropriations made from agriculture.

(B) Appropriations made from agriculture

Numerous attempts have been made to measure "the growth of the appropriations made from agriculture during the 1930s and 1940s to 'make a balance sheet' by putting a value to the net effect, positive or negative, of these exactions on the resources of the land and industry." However interesting they may be these discussions do not seem capable of resulting in global quantitative conclusions.

In fact collectivization and mass repression led above all to qualitative changes in an upheaval in social relationships which subverted the countryside in the recruitment of the authorities. Henceforth the countryside was open to extraction and the exactions made from the peasants' production and income and from the peasant population itself were various: an increase of procurement, the imposition of taxes, making to pay for the use of agricultural machinery concentrated in the MTS, taxes, the development of "visitors" between industrial and agricultural production which went against the peasants, the compulsory contribution by individuals to the establishment of the "productive funds" of the kolkhozes etc. These exactions revealed only certain aspects of the pillage of the countryside. Another aspect more important would appear later namely the drawing off part of the peasant labor force toward industry and the mines either as free workers or as forced labor. In the one case the drawing off took the form of an urbanization and industrialization process; in the other it took the form of deportations whose scale is not as we have seen easily translatable into figures.

For the moment we will look at some of the forms of exaction which are relatively better known.

(i) The increase in the quantity of agricultural products appropriated in the countryside

The appropriations that the state made from agricultural production moved through several channels: first leases of

products,¹⁸ "obligatory deliveries" (for which the price was even less than for "purchased" products and lacking any prevalence of "sales contracts") requisitions, confiscations, taxes-in-kind, payment in-kind for "services rendered" by the MTS etc. It would be tedious and useless to list all these forms of exactions and their respective importance (which in any case were very variable and often little known). We will therefore generalize all these exactions under the term "procurements," and then give some indications about the actual conditions in which the procurements were achieved. We will concentrate our attention on the procurement of grain, which had decisive economic and social importance.

The official figures covering the harvest and the procurement of grain do not always agree. We regard as particularly significant those quoted by M. Levin in his contribution to *Essays in Honor of E.H. Carr*. For several key years the figures are as follows:¹⁹

	<i>Grain harvest (million tons)</i>	<i>Procurement</i>	<i>Balance (gross)</i>
1928	73.3	10.7	62.6
1930	77.1	22.1	55.0
1931	69.4	22.8	46.6
1935	62.4	28.3	34.1
1939	67.3	32.1*	35.2

* Average of 1938-40

The figures quoted (which are confirmed by numerous other sources) indicate that the reduction of the gross balance remaining is an almost continuous curve until the mid 1930s. At that period, the gross balance left in the countryside was no more than 54 percent of that in 1928.

Between 1935 and 1939, the balance rose only by 0.9 million tons while production increased by 4.9 million. This increase therefore was hardly a "paying proposition" for the peasantry.

The quantities of grain which the villages had at their effective disposition did not fall quite at the same speed. In fact grain was resold by the state to the villagers either in the "traditionally" deficit regions or in certain cases of famine.

These sums were generally made at a price greater than the buying price of these same cereals by the state in the form of payments. In any case in the years 1932-34 the amounts received in the countryside were very much less than those which exacerbated the famine from which the peasantry was at that time suffering.

When one takes into account the results which is not always possible, the net balance available to the village may be obtained. During the First Five-Year Plan the average yearly cash sum of approximately £5 million tons to 5.5 billion tons between 1928-29 and 1931-32.* This recent figure corresponds to the need for grain used for sowing and for livestock feeding, even if the massive reduction of livestock ended to some extent reduce the need for grain in the countryside a circumstance which helped to increase the global production rate.

During the 1930s the state also very much increased its purchases of what it made on agricultural products other than grain. The overall result of the policy which was followed was a substantial fall of consumption of non-agricultural stuffs in the countryside.

This loss was only partially compensated by an increase in the supplies and payments which came to the peasants. In contrast there was a serious deterioration in the terms of exchange between the state and countryside. Hence the favorable effect for the peasantry of the measures already made on agricultural production.

The shortcomings of the available statistics allow us to gain only some aspects of the development of the terms of exchange between the state and peasants and probably the most fundamental aspects.

(2) The terms of exchange between state and peasantry

The state-peasantry terms of exchange varied considerably during the 1930s. The following points involve above all the kolkhoz peasantry which soon represented the bulk of the peasantry.

During the First Five-Year Plan exchanges between the peasants and towns (which essentially means the state peasants)

organizations) were, in principle, always regulated by the *kontraktatsiya* by virtue of which the peasants promised to sell the produce to the state by administrative contract who stood in the peasants' name to deliver predetermined quantities of products to the state. In return the latter was to provide predetermined amounts of industrial products. In reality, the system did not operate as it should have done. On the one hand the state organizations were not capable of meeting the supply obligations for the benefit of the peasants. On the other hand the procurement organizations often demanded deliveries larger than those laid down in the *kontraktatsiya*. This situation resulted from a policy which itself was a consequence of the class offensive conducted against the peasantry with a view to minimizing accumulation by the state.

The statistics allow an evaluation very approximately of the balance by value of these exchanges. Thus between 1929 and 1931 when the amounts of agricultural products provided by the state increased massively the volume of deliveries of industrial products for compensation by the agricultural population fell by 10 percent; it fell by about another 20 percent between 1930 and 1932.¹ These figures indicate moreover the drop in the supply to the peasants of industrial consumer goods for they take no account of the disappearance of the rural art and handicrafts which produced a substantial part of the products needed by the peasants.

Although the peasantry delivered more and more products and received less and less in return, its relationship to the state became the stronger while the state gains power. It became more or less stationary after 1931 but it continued to rise slightly afterwards, while the mass of which peasants bought industrial products from the state increased substantially.²

In 1931 measures were taken to ease the material difficulties of the peasantry. They consisted mainly in authorizing peasants and kolkhoziks to sell directly a part of their production (which for the kolkhoziks came from their plots and from their individual plots) to consumers and at free prices which were usually higher than those paid by the state. In October 1931 the kolkhozes and the sovkhozes were similarly authorized to make such sales "so long as they had fulfilled

animal products. But the prices at which peasants bought industrial products increased substantially, for example, the price of cotton goods increased by eight times between 1928 and 1937.

In sum, after the beginning of the 1930s there was a systematic exacerbation of the living conditions of the peasantry through the direct exploitation of forced labor on the collective farms and to indirect exploitation exercised through exchange and price movements.

The intensified exploitation of the peasantry entailed a series of consequences. It kept at a very low level the income that the members of agricultural artels drew from their work within the latter.²² Closely related to this, it had the effect of allocating a decisive role to the economic activities of the family in production. Such family activities in no way bore an 'exploitative' nature (as kolkhoz fiction claims because it was indispensable for the existence of the kolkhoz system).

(4) Observations about the financial contribution of agriculture to accumulation by the state

The indirect forms of exploitation of the peasants allowed the state to draw from agriculture a "financial contribution" to accumulate much more than would appear at first sight. This emerges not only from the relative development of prices of agricultural and industrial products, but also from an examination of the fiscal mechanisms which underlay this development during the 1930s. Agriculture therefore played a considerable role in the indirect financing of state accumulation. In fact, in the state budget - through which passed the main monetary flows which financed state accumulation - its place was occupied in the receipts column by the following:²³ In 1937, for example, this tax produced about 75 percent of budget receipts and it affected essentially agricultural products including those of the food industry. The rate at which these products were taxed was particularly high: 33 to 55 percent of the selling price for vegetable oils from 37 to 87 percent of the selling price for meat. On the largest part of the fiscal receipts coming from agricultural products (90 percent of these receipts related to taxes on bread and bakery products)

Finally, bearing in mind the fall in essential agricultural production, the new relationships of domination and exploitation to which the peasants were subjected, and the concrete and indirect forms in which this exploitation was clothed it can be seen that collectivization had catastrophic effects for the great mass of the peasantry. The low standard of life of the kolkhozniks is a consequence of the course followed by agricultural production and the exactions to which it was subject. Nevertheless, this low standard of living also resulted from the very working of the kolkhoz system.

Notes

1. Academy of Sciences of the USSR, *Political Economy* (London, 1957) pp. 464-65
2. The division of the rural population between these different forms of agricultural activity has been dealt with above
3. Academy of Sciences, *Political Economy* p. 469
4. See above, p. 471
5. See for example, the description of the Soviet agricultural situation in 1937 in *History of the Communist Party of the USSR*, B, p. 335-36
6. In the following pages reference will be made primarily to physical unit statistics which are more reliable than those based on prices. Special care will be made of recent statistics. In fact the latter show that some of the pre-war statistics partly obscure the depth of the catastrophe that collectivization from above heaped on agricultural production. However even recent statistics when they are in terms of value, the so-called allegedly constant "prices", continue to hide the scale of this disaster
7. As time passed the agricultural crisis became more fully that of "collectivized agriculture" properly described. Thus in 1940 the kolkhozes and sovkhozes disposed respectively of 8.3 and 8.8 percent of the sown area which had grown to 150.4 million hectares compared to 113.7 in 1928. See *Nikh. 1958a*, pp. 346-47 and p. 396 also *Sotsialisticheskoe struktural'noye SSSR* (Moscow 1936), p. 278
8. This figure is given by M. Lewin in "Taking Care: Soviet Policies of Agriculture, Procurement before the War," a contribution to *S. Abramovitch and others in Honour of E. H. Carr* (London, 1974), p. 10. This is a nominal net total; the most often-quoted figure is in fact 83.5 million tons
9. These figures are from the following sources for 1930 and 1939 (see preceding note). For 1936 the Soviet statistics covering the grain harvest are extremely confused. They hide a catastrophic situation. The figure of 61.1 million tons is an optimistic estimate, as has been calculated from the difference between the average production officially announced for 1933

- and 1917. The action was too fast except for the 1916-1917 period when it lagged for the period from 1911-1914-1915 and 1917-1918. See G. V. Shlyapnikov, p. 276. For 1917 to 1920 see M. A. Vaynshteyn, *Post-revolutionary Russia's grain output*. Her conclusion was as follows: "In Feb. 1920, p. 42 according to the same source the 1918 crop was 1.1 million tons less than still the registered 1919 level" (i.e. 1919 total).

10. N.K., 1920, p. 246.

11. See *Soviet Agricultural Statistics 1920* pp. 243-43. Other sources give 24.3 million tons in 1919 (see (Soviet Agricultural Statistics 1920) p. 243; Soviet Agriculture since the War, Prospects 1920-21, p. 100, or 1920) p. 26.

12. See above *Izvestiya R.S.F.S.R.*, pp. 243-44.

13. See C. Brinton, *A Short History of the Russian Revolution* (Paris, 1921), p. 31, among Soviet pre-war sources are indicated:

a. I. G. Sazonov, in an article in *Voprosy Poljotvoda i sovushchego krestyanstva* (1913-14), is quoted by N. N. K. (ibid. p. 24) as saying that Soviet agriculture produced triple the power needed by 1913 (i.e. 1.7 million and 1.2 million in 1912 respectively and a work horse had to pull one tractor to equal two horses).

b. It may be noted that the size of machinery that emerged from the war as a result of concentration in agriculture were put into what during the war was below).

c. See *Soviet agricultural statistics to Jan. 1920-21* printed by N. N. K. in *The Administration of Soviet Russia under The Bureau of the People* (1920-1926) (London, 1926), pp. 154-55.

d. Here are the names of some of those economists and economists who came over to the war economy created by these economists. A. N. Pashkov, who became a chairman of the People's Commissariat of Finance - Commissar of Finance 1918, and then became a price controller in the Ministry of Finance and controller during the first war plan, he became People's Commissar of Finance from December 1918 to January 1920, p. 11. G. I. Gaidar, People's Commissar of Finance from April to October 1920. In November 1920 he joined the People's Commissariat of Finance, p. 10. A. V. Stoyanov, People's Commissar of Finance in the People's Commissariat of Finance 1920-1921, Commissar of Finance 1921-1922, p. 110. L. I. Uritsky, People's Commissar of Finance and Commissar of Finance Appointed to the First Five Year Plan - Finance Articles" in *Soviet Review*, Dec. 1974, pp. 750ff.

14. These figures come from other works but the basis for all of the figures is good Soviet data which is to say that part of their judgment is their response of a priori knowledge that there could not be a real 1918-1919 grain harvest if there could not have been grain in 1918-1919.

15. See M. Lewis, "Taking Grain," p. 247.

16. These figures are taken from the following for data & references relating to the preceding figure with modifications. The figures are given by P. B. Lewis in his introduction to the *First Five Year Plan*, pp. 1-2.

21. These percentages are calculated from Baranov's data, taking into account the estimations made by J.F. Karač in *The Soviet Rural Community*, p. 50.
22. Between 1928 and 1931 the prices that the state paid for agricultural products delivered as the planned procurement passed from an index of 100 to 115.6 before falling back to 109.3 in 1933. Meanwhile the index of prices at which the state sold industrial consumer products moved from 100 in 1926 to 119.1 in 1931 and to 204.3 in 1932. See J. Karač, *Soviet Rural Community*, p. 50.
23. KPSS (1953), Vol. 2 pp. 874ff.
24. B. Kertész, *Les Marchés privés en URSS* (Paris 1956) p. 123.
25. See above p. 127 and *Pravda*, May 7 and 11, 1932.
26. Except for industrial crops like for example sugar beets and cotton.
27. In 1932 the index of prices for agricultural products and on the "Food" market reached 3,006.7 (1928 = 100). See J.F. Karač's contribution to *The Soviet Rural Community*, p. 50.
28. On these various points see B. Kertész, *Les Marchés*, p. 131.
29. See J. Müller ed. *The Soviet Rural Community*, p. 56.
30. (In average a quintal of flour brought 6.2 rubles in 1930 and 6.10 in 1939) (See Kertész, *Les Marchés*, p. 13 and also A. Nové, *On Economic History*, p. 243).
31. A. Nové see above p. 140. See also the table on p. 113 of the first December issue of *Economie et Politique* 1957. In addition it must be noted that the price at which peasants and townsmen sold their produce on the Free market which had been multiplied by 10 between 1928 and 1932 (the amount offered being then minimal) fell by more than a half between 1933 and 1937. From 1937 to 1940 the evolution of prices of sale and purchase did not improve the lot of the kolkhoz peasantry quite the contrary in fact (See J. Müller ed. *The Soviet Rural Community*, p. 57).
32. This question will be dealt with later.
33. This would not be apparent if only direct taxation of agriculture was examined. But in the product of the agricultural tax. For example, in 1937 this tax (One third of the net income of farmers provided only one percent of budgetary receipts. This percentage is calculated from Soviet sources in L. Bettelheim, *La Planification soviétique*, pp. 1, 3 and 17).
34. The size of the consumption receipts and total receipts obtained by the state through the peasants extracted for practical nothing from the bureaucracy was considerable. Thus in 1933-34 the price at which the state bought wheat from the grain areas was from 6.2 to 9.4 kopeks per kilo, while wheat flour was sold in state shops for 25 to 60 kopeks against ration coupons and 10 kopeks 4 to 9 kopeks off ration. For potatoes the prices were as follows. Purchases at 1 to 4 kopeks and sales at 20 to 30 kopeks sold off ration at 1.2 to 7 kopeks (see R. Hirschman, *Let History Judge*, p. 92).

The kolkhoz system

THE new social relationships which developed during the period of "collectivization" were much more complex than official accounts suggest. To grasp this complexity it is necessary to examine not only the working of simply the isolated kolkhoz (which is a false abstraction), but rather that of the *kolkhoz system*.

True, this system included the kolkhoz (the "collective farm") but it also included the Party and state organs which managed the kolkhozes, and the so called 'individual holdings' of the kolkhozniks, from which the latter drew a great part, and sometimes the essential part, of their subsistence.

At the end of the 1930s the kolkhoz on average disposed of more than 600 hectares of cultivated land (against 72 in 1938) on which worked about 80 kolkhoznik families. The work was organized in an "industrial" way, following capitalist forms of the organization of labor in teams and in specialized brigades put under the authority of supervisory personnel. The work was collective and was carried out with the help of a certain number of machines. However in 1940 the level of mechanization in agriculture was still quite low, scarcely more than two tractors, on average, per kolkhoz. Additionally, these tractors, like the other major equipment did not belong to the kolkhozes but to an external organization, the M.S. which operated them according to directives coming from the managing economic and political organizations. Consequently the

immediate products were reduced to the role of simple participants placed in the production process organized by those who had effective possession of the means of production that is the cadres of the kolkhoz and even more the cadres of the bodies directing the kolkhoz system.

C. The "individual auxiliary economy"

The term 'individual auxiliary economy' is misleading. It suggests that the latter was only a simple appendage of the collective economy. But it was much more than that. It was an essential part of the kolkhoz system without which the latter could not survive. Also the term 'individual' obscured another reality, namely the *familial* nature of the plot and the livestock which kolkhoz households could have at their disposal. So it is better to talk about the *individual holdings* of the kolkhozniks.

At the level of the work process, this type of agriculture depended on a division of labor limited to the family and even to the nuclear family constituted by a couple and their young children. In certain cases, and in certain regions (for example in Central Asia) members of the wider family could participate in this division of labor. The size that this familial agriculture could attain was reduced by regulatory measures. These measures controlled the conditions under which the products of the individual holding could be sold on the free market (called the "kolkhoz market").

The history of this regulation is complicated. Only some features which illuminate the conditions under which the kolkhoz system was developed will be reviewed here. At the beginning of collectivization from above in 1929 some attempts at integral collectivization were made which would not have left out auxiliary economy. However from 1930 it was officially acknowledged that given the way in which kolkhozes operated and the obligations to which they were subjected the auxiliary economy was a vital necessity. It was to supply the kolkhozniks and also the towns.

(a) The plot, family livestock,
and the kolkhoz market

On March 2, 1930 Presid. published an obligatory draft statute for kolkhozes. This statute distributed the land of the kolkhoz into plots to the kolkhoz (which was required to take the form of a unit—in other words of the traditional *khushar* corporation—but it left to the kolkhozants the personal possession of their house, today dual plot—a few fowl and several head of livestock).²

(In October 30, 1931 a decision of the Plenum of the Central Committee devoted to Soviet trade and the improvement of the socialist food supply "showed—under certain conditions—[that] it is to sell their production directly to consumers." This decision gave the state a complete hold on town-country markets (which had been intended in 1930-31) was also in its first time for the authorities acknowledged that if they were to take at a low price a large part of the products produced by the kolkhozes, they had not only to authorize the socialist market, but allow the kolkhozants to sell some products on the open market, from which they would draw that minimum of a living wage so that the collective economy was then incapable of ensuring them.)

In relation to the initial intentions of integral collectivization and the ban on all direct sales by kolkhozants of part of their production, the real change of direction was after 1932 when the kolkhoz market was officially re-established. The principles drawn by the peasants and by the kolkhozants in relation to the kolkhoz market grew rapidly and even more after a decree of May 10, 1932 abolished the very heavy turn over tax which had been applied to these sales in 1931.

Nevertheless it must be noted that right up to the beginning of the Second Five Year Plan (1933-?) the right of kolkhozants to have their own individual livestock was far from being respected by local authorities who were still prepared to completely expropriate peasants, which led the latter to slaughter their livestock. Thus, on February 12, 1933 Stalin had to put in a few words at the conference of kolkhoz stock dealers:

It was not so long ago that there existed a small misunderstanding between the Soviet government and the kolkhozniks.⁶ It concerned the cow. But now the business has been settled and the misunderstanding has been put right. We have arrived a situation in which the majority of kolkhoz households already have one cow. Another year or two and there will not be a single kolkhoznik without his own cow.⁷

In reality what the kolkhozniks obtained through a series of decrees⁸ was not only the right to possess one cow but of having an individual livestock establishment: one cow, two calves, a sow and piglets, ten sheep (maximum on unirrigated number of fowl) and twenty hens (at most), and an additional certain area of cultivable land which could be as much as a quarter or half hectare, and sometimes even more.⁹

In spite of the limitations placed on their size individual livestock and plots tended to play an important part while being the source of deep contradictions within the kolkhoz system.¹⁰

On several occasions these contradictions and the attempt of the authorities to "control" the totality of agricultural production gave rise to "offensives against private activities". Generally, such "offensives" had the effect of temporarily lowering agricultural production, making the food supply of the towns more precarious.

These "offensives" reveal the desire of the authorities and of the exploiting class whom in effect they defended to subdue as far as possible the kolkhozniks and to put their hands on the greater part of the products of their labor. The often given may also be explained by the circumstance that the non collective activity of the kolkhozniks (and to lesser extent the sovkhоз workers who also had obtained the right to cultivate a little land and raise some animals) tended to take up a large part of the labor which they performed and were the origin of a quite large part of their income.

In sum just before the war the plots of the sovkhozniks were in general smaller than authorities. In 1938 each peasant family on average disposed only of 0.44 hectares. 10.6 percent of kolkhoz households exceeded the authorities - an individual

holdings at this period accounted for only 1.4 percent of the sown area and not all of them had the number of an "individual holding" which they had a right.¹²

(b) Income received by the kolkhozniks as producers in possession of an "individual holding"

The very small measured size of individual holding operations and the *at-hoc* character of the production was reflected in them (swing ploughs, hoes, sickles etc.) were partly compensated by intensive and careful labor which was above all provided by women.¹³

The small amount of published information as well as its offensiveness and contradictions make it very difficult to estimate more precisely the receipts drawn by the kolkhozniks from their plots and from their individual investments. However this information is sufficient to suggest that during the 1930s the tiny "familial agricultural operations" of the kolkhozniks provided them with an income equivalent to or less than that which they obtained from the expropriated "semi-collectivized" land.¹⁴

This result was all the more remarkable in that the individual land was cultivated at was used with a low intensity and that they covered only 3.9 percent of the total sown area. Despite this in 1937 the individual plots provided about 21.5 percent of agricultural production in the Soviet Union. In 1948 they provided the greater part of the meat and dairy receipts of an average kolkhoz family and the greater part of animal feed, potatoes, fruits and vegetables. Most of the kolkhozniks were for the most part supplied by the kolkhoz.

In 1937 individual livestock operations provided 14.9 percent of the milk, 73.9 percent of the meat, 70.4 percent of the skins and 43 percent of the wool.¹⁵ At that time animals belonging to kolkhozniks formed the major part of the total livestock.

In order to evaluate the economic role of individual holdings on the part of the kolkhozniks it should also be noted that the monetary receipts of these latter during the 1930s came mostly (73-85 percent) of receipts from sales on the free market.

of the prices there were several times higher than those paid by the state.¹⁰ Most of the produce sold there came from individual agriculture with only a small fraction coming from kolkhozes in kind made by the kolkhozies. However from 1947 the production from plots and from family investors was subjected to increased state requisitions which tended to reduce the share of monetary receipts coming from sales on the free market of products from individual holdings, even though the reduction in amounts sold was partly compensated by a rise of the prices at which agricultural products could be sold.

Generally speaking, the "familial non-agriculture" of the kolkhozes played a decisive role simultaneously in the supplying of citizens the daily substance of nutrition belonging to collective farms and the obtaining by these farms of a monetary income. True the products of collective activities were indispensable for the provisioning of kolkhozies but the revenues that they drew from these activities seem to have been not much more than a mere complement to the incomes coming from familial agriculture.

The output of familial agriculture partly entered the channels of trade through the kolkhoz market or through transactions made with state commercial organizations and cooperatives. In addition familial agriculture bore the weight of compulsory deliveries and various taxes. Despite the pressure thus exercised by the state necessitating surplus from familial agriculture, the latter above all served the needs of the peasant family that considerably reduced the expense of the reproduction of its labor force supplied by the kolkhoz and enabled the latter to be subordinated to the maximum extent to the demands of the state and to accumulation.

II. The kolkhoz

(a) Relationships of production and domination within the kolkhoz

The kolkhoz which emerged from collectivization from above was characterized by the existence within it of a marked

hierarchical structure: a small number of managers and other direct workers and means of work to definite tasks (and the latter is principle corresponded to orders coming from organizations placed "above" the kolkhoz). The direct producers were thus reduced to the role of simple executants placed at the lower level of a structure in which certain features of the capitalist organization of labor were combined with more primitive forms. This encouraged the reproduction of a particular type of agrarian despotism. In the given ideological and socio-economic conditions this structure was adequate for the extraction of surplus which was especially big.

The great majority of the lower kolkhozniks were entrapped mainly with work that was manual and unskilled and among them women were the majority.¹ They had particularly difficult lives being at the lowest income level (excluding the camp workers).

In addition kolkhozniks did not have the same rights as the Soviet citizens. One might say that the kolkhoz population had only duties towards the managing organs of the kolkhoz and towards the state which, so far as the kolkhoz population was concerned, had only rights. Various authorities took upon themselves the power to take back from the lower kolkhoznik one or another material advantage which had been originally officially recognized as his in writing, and in practice he could not protest if he did it would bring him more trouble than it was worth. To justify their behavior the authorities did not hesitate to claim that what is good for the state and the kolkhoz is good for the kolkhoznik.² For example the most leftist Stalinists would put the following words in the mouth of the Party official:

What is there so different between the interests of the kolkhozniks and the interests of the state in general? If the state takes grain to satisfy some need or other the satisfying of this need is equally in the interest of the peasants.³

In fact by reason of the very own exploitation that they endured the kolkhozniks were made to believe part of the rights recognized by the Constitution and which were

rights respected for other citizens were quite simply absent. Thus the kolkhozniks were economically and politically discriminated against, although Art. 10 "23" of the Constitution forbids any discrimination between different citizens.

2. Working conditions of the kolkhozniks

At the centre of the discrimination which affected ordinary kolkhozniks were obviously their working conditions. These conditions were fixed in a mainly arbitrary way by the administrative organs of the kolkhoz. By decision of these organs each kolkhoznik offering himself for manual labour was forced to face the authorities of a brigade. The latter assigned his daily tasks and fixed the time limit in which they had to be done. Part of these tasks corresponded to norms fixed in advance by the technical service. Ordinary kolkhozniks had controls either (the way it was) that these norms were fixed nor of the way the authorities evaluated the success rate with which they had accomplished the imposed norms. However it was on the basis of such norms and such evaluations that the remuneration of each kolkhoznik was fixed.

From 1933 the central authorities multiplied the norms. For example a law of February 28 1933 fixed 35 norms for field work in 1933 new tasks were imposed. In 1940 234 tasks had norms. These norms were established by research institutes. Their application in the long required the participation of a growing number of brigadiers and supervisors. It also required an arrangement of the accounting establishment of the kolkhozes. The norms applied in the different kolkhozes were theoretically adapted to local conditions in practice this was far from being the case for pressures of all kinds were exerted on the way in which the norms were adopted and applied.

The extension of this system did not give the kolkhozniiks the advantages of a free wage. At the same it did impose a discipline of work analogous to that which stemmed from the wage per piece which according to Marx is the form of wage paid equal to the capitalist mode of production. It has the most adequate for capital of ratio of the above form and surplus value. The discrimination suffered by the kolkhozniks

and the contributions of the kolkhoz system must stand themselves here in the circumstance that the system imposed on them a form of exploitation which was no less than that even though they were not wage earners.

The administration which controlled kolkhozes was vested itself in the circumstance that they were not engaged about regulation in the protest that they were cooperative workers. Theoretically the decision that the kolkhoz administration could be considered to be the assembly of kolkhozniks is really that the members of the kolkhoz did not interfere in the internal affairs of the kolkhoz. In reality the management functioned like a court of instance. It even took decisions that frequently by ordinary laws involving decisions having a judicial character it was not subordinate to any authority. In so far as the kolkhozniks were concerned it was a judge and interested party just as the leadership.

The workers of the committee demanded that the workers be given the evaluation by kolkhoz management of the way in which they had fulfilled the work in the kolkhoz. It could only intervene to regulate the kolkhoz in so far as it was a kolkhoz in a sum which was due to them by a decision already made by the kolkhoz.¹

The discriminatory situation in which the kolkhozniks found themselves placed them in a condition in which they could not be organized, because they were not citizens, they had no rights or social security. For this reason, they received no state aid or benefits from the various categories works for the upkeep of roads for which it did not confer other citizens the power of protection if the kolkhoz was bigger than in the towns. Above all they had no right to a trust way because the way which was distributed to them by the kolkhoz was a little what remained for distribution after the kolkhoz had allocated its resources in such a way as required by the socialist grouping with the procurator and the city which the kolkhoz who had went to the state and had abandoned property.

In addition to that being also applied to the courts, the kolkhozniks could be subjected to trials by the kolkhoz

management and have to pay "indemnities" for damage that they might have caused the amount of these damage payments was moreover, calculated by the kolkhoz management.²¹

In sum, the discriminatory "remuneration" which came to the kolkhoznik for his work in the collective economy and the uncertain nature of this "remuneration" had as a consequence the fact that this work constituted forced labor analogous to the corvee the bortschchins once owed to the feudal seigneur. Moreover it is significant that it became necessary to fix for kolkhozniks a definite number of compulsory work days to be contributed to the "collective" economy because the peasants did their work in the kolkhoz with great reluctance and were forced to devote themselves to their individual holdings a circumstance about which the Sov of leaders often complained.²²

In January 1934, at the Seventeenth Congress of the Party Andreyev (entrusted with agricultural problems in the U.S.S.R.) acknowledged that some kolkhozniks refused to work willingly on the collective land. At first these non-ideal situations imposed by the kolkhoz chairman. In May or November 1934 regulatory action was taken by the government to impose rather more strictly an obligation to work on the kolkhoz. The annual minimum number of obligatory work days was then fixed between 60 and 100 days per year (in 1942 this minimum number was fixed at 100-150 days per year (order of April 17, 1942).

(2) Quasi-state serfdom

In total, the mass of immediate producers who had been placed in the collective economy were in a situation resembling that of state serfs subject to obligatory labor to military divisions by those who managed the kolkhozes and were only exceptionally able to appeal to the chairman. Moreover, they were forbidden in practice to quit the kolkhoz. They were really attached to the soil like the old-time peasant had been attached to the soil or the serf to the master and

The ban on a kolkhoznik leaving the kolkhoz unless he had permission from the authorities (which was also the case for

and) took the Russian peasant back not only to before 1917 but even to before the Stolypin reform (which had abolished the exemption status of peasants)²⁰ and, still worse, to before the law of February 19 (March 3) 1861 which—with many dues and limitations—freed the peasants from serfdom making them “free” and removed them from the law of the police and the justice of the landlord.

This backward step resulted from no law but from the *kolkhoz statutes* which did not allow the kolkhoznik to leave permanently his residence and his place of work except after obtaining the permission of the kolkhoz, which meant in reality of the kolkhoz management.

Admittedly the kolkhoz statutes indicated that the kolkhoznik “could leave the kolkhoz,” but as they did not specify in what conditions he could make use of this “right,” the latter depended in practice on the “goodwill” of the kolkhoz authorities—a judgment that they made about the effects of a departure, the sympathy or antipathy that the managers of the kolkhoz felt toward the applicant, the ‘strings’ he might pull among these “superior” authorities, and local custom which could always be revoked).

The need to obtain this permission in order to quit the kolkhoz was retained up to the 1970s. In the words of the Soviet press, this permission (which from 1942 enabled an internal passport to be obtained) was commonly described by the term *“permit of emigration”* which at the time of serfdom was the name of the document given to the peasants by the landlord who rented them.

It is typical that the peasant status of the kolkhoz gave him treatment by the formalities of *“exodus”* from the kolkhoz but classified nothing—and for good reason—about the right of departure.²¹ Soviet authors who have studied these questions show that even when a kolkhoz woman married a town-dweller she had to obtain the right to leave it from the kolkhoz management. Similarly a kolkhoznik whose daughter married to the town could not in his turn go and live with her without being authorized. In general permission to leave was not granted (and this was not a right) except when the kolkhoznik had obtained a contract with another enterprise, and accommodation.²²

A kolkhoznik might possibly abandon the kolkhoz. He was not expelled. He lost his house and his expulsion was written in documents, which put him in a precarious and dangerous situation. People then said that he had obtained his card for personal identification documents of tsarist times which carried details of the bearer's past as an unemployed. He was no longer a kolkhoznik or worker or employee being re-enrolled as an "industrious peasant" and liable to punishment. He was in fact directly threatened by very harshpressive measures during the 1930s. This did not prevent many kolkhozniks leaving in this way. At first they worked at occasionally sleeping in railway stations or in huts and they moved around so that he was "registered" at the police station. Some were eventually arrested for vagrancy while others ended up finding a regular job and accommodation.²⁴

The difficulties of those who left without being officially fired were all the greater because they possessed neither the internal passport which was usually required nor the exit book. These two "documents" were distributed to the dweller during the 1930s but were not given in the documents. The introduction of the "internal passport" was indeed a feature of tsarism established by the October Revolution. The travelling millionaire had defined peasants as citizens with a passport.

I should be emphasized that it was not only the ex-kolkhoznik who was attached to the soil. This attachment extended in reality to the members of his family although in principle membership of the kolkhoz was "implied" and voluntary. In practice at the end of the 1930s or even earlier kolkhoz families were "automatically" entered in the local kolkhoz. This practice continued after the war despite the protests of certain kolkhozniks who wanted their children to be attached to the kolkhoz only at their parental request. These protests by kolkhozniks were never reported in spite of the legal texts by the collective farm chairman who kept a register of kolkhozniks household by household in the course of which what was kept before the abolition of exit book in 1981.²⁵

The attachment of the kolkhozniks to the soil put them in a position of total subordination to the organs of the kolkhoz

management and it had an effect on the conditions under which the kolkhozniks worked and were compensated.

Although the management of the kolkhoz could act at its own discretion in relations with its kolkhozniks, the same could not be said about its relations with superior bodies. For example, industrial enterprises which wanted to recruit manpower in the country-side could be authorized by the appropriate central offices to make agreement with kolkhoz managers.¹⁷ These managers usually did not wish to be deprived of their power but it was difficult for them to escape from 'organizational recruitment' when the industrial enterprises were supported by the higher authorities. It sometimes happened that the collective farm managers demanded that their kolkhozniks be compensated for the 'loss of manpower' which was imposed on them in this way. This "compensation" was based on the wages of the kolkhozniks sent to work in industry. Popularly this levy was described by the term *obrok* which evoked the dues that the serf had to pay to his landlord when the latter allowed him to leave for the town.¹⁸

In sum, during the 1930s millions of peasants nevertheless left the country-side, because they took advantage of the organization in the early days, or they had been excommunicated from the kolkhoz, or they had taken their 'voluntary' or they had been recruited in the framework of organization for the tens of millions who remained attached to their kolkhoz, this obviously did not change the situation of quasi-state serfdom in which they found themselves.

C) Some remarks about the return to forms of quasi-serfdom during the 1930s

Marx observed that,

The tradition of all past generations weighs like an alp upon the brain of the living. A whole people that imagines it has imparted to itself accelerated powers of motion through a revolution, suddenly finds itself transferred back to a dead epoch and [then] there turn up again the old calendar, the old names, the old edicts...¹⁹

In a certain way it is what happened to the Soviet peasants during the 1920's. Their new masters indeed treated the old instruments of production (true they renamed them in new terms) but the peasants were not deceived and gave them their old names.

But it should be emphasized that the return to relationships of dependence and exploitation remains part of the relations that is appropriate to *serfdom* in its true, indicates that this return was purely and simply to the old social relationship and the old class relationships in particular. Three points must be kept in view:

(1) The kolkhoz was neither a "bad" or a "large" landlord property was it purchased and the use made of what it produced were determined by the requirements of accumulation of the state or society requirements which were mediated by the Party and by the state.

(2) the existence of relationships like those of serfdom which typified the kolkhoz does not mean that the kolkhoz was escaped capitalist exploitation. These relationships could still be such exploitation base on them in a specific form. Such a situation is not exceptional. The land-poor peasants of western capitalist countries are likewise subject under the laws to the exploitation of capital. It was the same in the 19th century for the slaves on the plantations in the American South. It is also not unusual today for example for the Puerto Rican immigrants to the American Republic where they are attached to their employers by debts that they are unable to repay.

The work process within the kolkhoz was that of a剥削 (toil) (even as a feature) of the capitalist work process with its forms of division and hierarchy. It tended to concentrate at one pole what Marx called the "material forces of production" (even though the latter were extremely weak) and to deprive the others, workers and peasants, of even tended to appropriate from the old peasants their knowledge and experience. Armed by the general indifference to work, it succeeded here quite well. The peasants' more experienced, actually complicated was replaced only by the unrelated knowledge of experts. The results are still visible today.

(3) In the social structure of a socialist kolkhoz the bourgeois is no way occupied the same place as the old landowners.

or feudal lords. They were appointed and dismissed by political chiefs placed above them, and they were responsible to the latter for the achievement of a certain number of tasks. In fact, they were subordinate agents of society scale tasks connected with the extraction of surplus labor and the accumulation of surplus value.

III. The kolkhoz managerial stratum and its placement in the general social structure

According to the kolkhoz statutes, the supreme directing organ was the general assembly of kolkhozniks. In theory the assembly could annul unjustified decisions by the chairman, vote for obligatory resolutions, adopt or modify the kolkhoz budget and remove the chairman. In practice the kolkhozniks could not exercise any of these rights except in very exceptional cases (in particular when they were impelled to do so by the authorities at a higher level). Apart from such cases kolkhozniks who took the risk of opposing the will of the 'chairman' would appear to be suspect and rotten elements and would be exposed to severe troubles and even sanctions.

In actuality the kolkhoz chairmen were, therefore, not subject to any control from below. They were appointed from above, they were "simple administrators" who often did not call the general assemblies and the control organs not only so as to have their decisions 'ratified.' In popular language they were often referred to as the kolkhoz directors. Their power was much more than that of the local soviets, which usually went along with the measures they took. Their authority over the kolkhozniks moreover much exceeded that of the director of an enterprise over "his" workers, since the kolkhozniks depended on their managers not only during work, but during their daily life, for example for the upkeep of their houses, the preservation or reduction of their individual plots, and even problems of food supply.²⁰

However management of the kolkhoz was not carried on by the chairman alone but by a managing stratum, whose career depended on Party and state decisions. The existence of this

stratum limited the claims of the chairman to exercise the powers of a 'sole director' because its members could review the functions of the chairman involving *supervisory state interests*. In this way the state administrative nature of the kolkhoz was reinforced.

The existence of a kolkhoz managerial stratum met other needs besides that of ensuring the supervision of the kolkhoz chairman for there were other means of supervising him.

One of the functions of the kolkhoz was to transform agricultural work into an enterprise of industrial character developing a new division of labour and new styles of cultivation involving the use of mechanical and chemical techniques rationalizing its operations and improving its administration with proper book-keeping. This function of the kolkhoz required the presence of a specialized body of specialists. The latter performed quasi managerial tasks and worked over the transformation of the road from of production so as to allow an increase of production and of profitability. Just as the cadre charged with these tasks succeeded in actively tackling them their activity tended to transform the kolkhoz into a state enterprise - a form deserved to be superior to the kolkhoz form).

The second essential function performed by the 'collective farm' (a term which predominated throughout the 1930s) was to ensure at any price the satisfaction of the state's immediate needs for agricultural products: the latter to be obtained at the lowest possible monetary cost. Above all it was a question of guaranteeing the procurement of grain and to that end of introducing in the collective farm a factory discipline at a time when the material basis and the ideological conditions necessary for a relatively 'flexible' exercise of this discipline were lacking. Hence the role played by naked repression in the operation of the kolkhoz and the multiplication of supervisory and control tasks assumed by the kolkhoz managerial stratum and by the little bosses placed under its orders.

The increase of supervisory tasks thereby expressed the subordination of the kolkhoz cadre to the general demand for capital accumulation which the departments of state were striving for. To cope with its duty to make the kolkhoz managerial

structure took the form of a group that was complex and hierar-
chical. It included elements that were genuinely dominant—the
 nucleus of a new agricultural and rural bourgeoisie, and elements
 that were relatively dominated forming an agricultural petite
 bourgeoisie. The lower ranks of the latter included by definition
 occupying more or less privileged positions.

A detailed analysis of the personnel of the kolkhoz managerial stratum and of its characteristics would require an extensive and long treatment. The discussion will therefore be limited to certain general points.

For a start it should be noted that toward the end of the 1930s the kolkhoz managerial stratum was still relatively small. At that time there were about 240,000 kolkhozes.¹³ The latter (according to figures quoted in 1939 referring to 1937) had 582,000 kolkhoz chairmen, assistant chairmen, and managers of animal breeding farms. To these agricultural cadres must be added 80,000 agronomists and 16,000 other agricultural technical staff (but by no means all of these were entirely within a kolkhoz making a total of 758,000 in these categories, which is a small figure for a kolkhoz population of more than 60,000,000).¹⁴ To these cadres who constituted the hierarchical summit of the kolkhoz strata were added the intermediate cadres mainly brigade and team leaders.¹⁵

Most of these intermediate cadres had no particular technical knowledge. As A. Arutyunyan remarked in his training the kolkhoz intelligentsia was hardly distinguished from the mass of kolkhozniks,¹⁶ of which in 1939 almost a quarter was completely illiterate and only 17 percent had finished the seven year school.¹⁷ The cadres therefore fulfilled essentially command supervisory and control functions while there was a shortage of specialists (for example of tractor drivers and agronomists) bearing in mind the requirements of the large-scale mechanization that had been forecast for the kolkhozes. To the cadres entrusted with command and supervision in kolkhozes should be added those entrusted with administrative functions, mainly bookkeepers. However the command functions went to the kolkhoz chairmen, their deputies, and the brigade and team leaders some of whom were in the kolkhoz council of administration. These command functions were combined as we shall see—with those exercised by the kolkhoz

state organizations, for these organizations constantly intervened in kolkhoz activity.

The totality of the operating conditions of the kolkhozes, their manner of administration and the exactions that the state imposed on them determined the low level of kolkhozniks incomes and the inequalities which influenced their distribution.

III. The incomes of kolkhozniks and kolkhoz cadres

Before examining what incomes were received by the kolkhozniks from the "collective farm" it is necessary to give an indication of how these revenues were fixed. To do this, certain "rules" of the kolkhoz system should be recalled.

(a) The composition of incomes distributed by the kolkhozes, and how they were divided

Incomes of the kolkhozniks depended on the incomes of their kolkhoz. The latter in their turn depended on a multiplicity of elements over which the management of each kolkhoz (and, even more so, the kolkhozniks) had usually little influence: the scale of the different types of production mainly determined by the production plans and the means put at the disposition of the kolkhoz; the exactions that the state levied on this production, the prices which might be paid for part of the output taken by the state. All this determined for a given year the gross annual receipts of each kolkhoz.

However what would be distributed to the kolkhozniks did not directly depend on the annual gross receipts of their kolkhozes, but rather from what was left after other exactions had been levied leaving the balance of receipts payable to the kolkhozniks.

(1) The balance payable to the kolkhozniks

This balance was obtained by deducting from the gross receipts various "external" or "internal" charges. The "external

charges were the payments that the kolkhoz had turned over to the treasury or to various state organs (for example to the Ministry of Agriculture) and its internal charges. The internal charges were intended to finance the liquidation of the accumulation of the kolkhoz and its administrative expenses, notably the wages of its workers. The amount of all these charges depended principally on decisions made by authorities in the kolkhoz. After the kolkhoz had dealt with all its charges (at a time when gross receipts were low because of agricultural crisis), the deliveries made to the state and prices that were paid to the producers for agricultural products, the balance remaining for distribution to its members, was paltry. It was offered either in kind, or in money.¹⁰ It was figured on the basis of the "labor-day" unit of account.

C) Bookkeeping in "labor-days" or trudodni, and production norms

Throughout the year the work of each kolkhoznik was measured in units of account known as "labor-days" (or trudodni). This unit of account corresponded to the achievement of a certain task. However according to the nature of the work done one work-day and had the attribution of a smaller or greater number of trudodni. For a piece of work which was regarded as "easy" a work-day could only represent 1.75 trudodni; for work described as "difficult" it represented 3.5 trudodni. This principle assumed that the different items of work were classified according to category. In June 1940 a commission studied such a classification. In January 1941, on the basis of recommendations from various institutions, a kolkhoz conference classified work into four groups in which the equivalent of 1 work-day varied between 75 and 150 trudodni. Within the framework of the struggle against egalitarianism work was divided into seven groups in which the equivalent of a work day varied from 5 to 2.0 trudodni, that is a ratio of 1 to 4.¹¹

For a kolkhoznik to be considered as having provided one trudodni it was necessary not only that he should have spent a certain time in achieving a certain piece of work but also quite often that he satisfied certain production norms. The latter proliferated from 1941 at least for manual work.

(3) Calculating the value of a
"trudoden" and individual income

The income which compensated for a "trudoden" was not paid in advance. It was calculated by dividing the balance available for distribution in a kolkhoz by the total number of trudodni provided by all the kolkhozni of that kolkhoz during the course of the year. This division gave the relative value of a trudoden for the year in a given kolkhoz. As for the individual value, this was estimated to each kolkhozni by virtue of his collective work. This was obtained by multiplying the relative value of the trudoder by the number of trudodni which he had provided, acting in some cases a basic wage (larger for the cadres) and bonuses. The income distributed in this way was partly composed of a sum of money and partly of products of the kolkhoz.

This system of distribution was both burdensome and complicated. It subjected the direct producers to a series of rules and norms that were fixed externally. These often the receipts did not depend contrary to what was officially declared on the quantity and quality of their work, but on the way the work of each was evaluated, computed and checked. In addition what each kolkhozni received also depended on the work to which he had been allocated and the results achieved by the collective farm. Results on which personal work and the decisions of the kolkhozni had only minimal influence. Finally each person received what was due to him only a long time after the work had been done. The work done in the fall remuneration would be received only about a year later that is after the harvest had been taken in and all the accounting had been done.

(4) The size of income paid
by the kolkhoz to the kolkhozni

The circumstances in which the soviets maintained the kolkhoz is reveal that there was a great differentiation of incomes. Such a differentiation leads to the usefulness of figures relating to the average income received by soviets by

value of their collective work. However this average income is not entirely devoid of interest because it all we can number of expansions to be made. We will therefore give some facts about this income.

11. The average income received by kolkhozniks from the kolkhoz

Statistics relating to the income of kolkhozniks are conflicting and contradictory. The figures set here are quoted by A. Arutyunyan.⁴⁷ From these it emerges that since the average income received by a kolkhoznik from the kolkhoz rose to 12 rubles per month. This figure may be compared with an average income of 22 rubles for a worker in a workshop or of 34 rubles for a wage-earner in industry.⁴⁸

Even if it were accepted that the income derived from individual plots and livestock doubled the total income received by the kolkhozniks this income remained very much lower than the income of an industrial wage-earner. It is quite equal to that of a kolkhoz wage-earner. The latter usually has at his disposal not an individual plot but a garden which adds to his income by several rubles per month.⁴⁹

These figures confirm that in 1940 the collective farm kolkhozes was incapable of assuring a living standard for its members. The distributed remuneration did not insure reproduction of the work-energy of the kolkhozniks and families, hence the absolute necessity for the creation of individual plots for familial livestock raising and course its sales on the free market. All this is confirmation of the causes and effects of the peasant resistance to collectivization in the form in which it was carried out.

It may be said that the majority of the kolkhozniks could buy practically nothing, not even industrial products that could be regarded as everyday. This may be confirmed by quoting retail prices of certain consumer goods produced by industry (prices are of 1944 with in parentheses the 1928 price when available) a meter of cotton cloth was from 1 to 2.74 rubles (1-14), a meter of wooden cloth about 1-1.5 rubles (11.3), a pair of mens leather boots was from 42-43 rubles (10.6).⁵⁰

To summarize 'collectivization' therefore entailed a considerable reduction in main agricultural production and a collapse of the standard of life of the workers in the countryside. From this it should not be concluded that 'collectivization' was a total failure, because its real objective was not to improve the living conditions of the peasant masses but to create the conditions for their maximal exploitation, so as to assure a rapid expansion of state industry, and in general this objective was achieved.

However this "tree" of average income should not hide the "forest" of income inequalities. The inequalities can be seen as much between kolkhozes as *laissez faire* kolkhoz.

2) Income inequalities between kolkhozes

A detailed analysis of income inequalities between kolkhozes would require much time and, moreover would be difficult to carry out with the present availability of documentation. We shall therefore limit ourselves to pointing out that the circumstances of several tens of thousands of kolkhozes were such that at the end of the 1930s either they could not pay any monetary remuneration to their members for *trudodays* or the remuneration which they could pay was very inferior to the average payment. Thus in 1939 15,700 kolkhozes had been subjected to such burdens that they were unable to pay any monetary remuneration to their members and 46,000 others could only pay at the most 10-20 rubles per 'work-day'.²¹

(3) Internal inequalities in the kolkhoz

To the inequalities between kolkhozes should be added internal inequalities in each kolkhoz. The latter were the result of a policy whose principal elements were the following:

- (a) The distinction made between work of execution and work of direction. The former was remunerated exclusively on the basis of accounting in *trudodays*. The second was remunerated, in addition, by fixed wages and various bonuses.
- (b) The fixing of norms that were more or less easy to achieve. Any overfulfilment of the norm created the right to a proportional increase of remuneration. Conversely in the case of

non fulfillment of the norm the remuneration of the bonus plan was reduced. This brought about differences of effective remuneration in a range of 6 to 1 between the best paid agricultural worker and the worst paid. For example the first could earn more than 28 rubles monthly (in an average kolkhoz in 1940) and the second only 4.8 rubles.

c) In 1940 income inequalities between kolkhozniks at the same kolkhoz were made even greater by the establishment of a system of bonuses that were to be added to what was paid by virtue of the trudodni.¹⁴ These bonuses were paid to the heads of brigades (or teams) who exceeded their production plan or their productivity plan. As a general rule they were fixed in the form of a payment of a percentage of what was produced above the brigade plan, the distribution of these bonuses was itself subjected to various regulations.¹⁵

d) To the inequalities in the remuneration of manual workers connected with the classification of tasks to the kolkhoz norms more or less easy to fulfill. To the nature of the tasks allocated to the lower kolkhozniks by the chiefs of brigades or teams or by the managers of livestock farms and the inequalities due to the bonuses must be added the inequalities resulting from the higher rates of remuneration a lower ranking personnel of the kolkhozes and the skilled workers of the latter. Moreover, part of this remuneration was not directly in money terms (which was not the case in the old kolkhoznik).

On the eve of World War II the chairman of a kolkhoz received a fixed salary varying from 25-400 rubles monthly (the average being 150 rubles).¹⁶ This salary may be compared with the average total remuneration of a kolkhoznik which as quoted above was 12 rubles. In addition to this salary the chairman received a contribution which varied from 4 to 10 trudodni monthly; however on ordinary kolkhoz work he had no wage—was usually credited with about 15 trudodni monthly and often less. This remuneration of kolkhoz chairmen depended on the extent of the cultivated area in his kolkhoz during the year. In addition to this salary and this attribution of trudodni the kolkhoz chairman received a bonus equaling 15-40 percent of his total salary by virtue of an overfulfillment. Finally, after three years of service he

provided a supplementary bonus of \$ 15 per ton for each year of service.

Agreements stated by each workers' plant and district committee (and its members of the council of administration) received high contractual credit in trade and for the over fulfillment of their plan - a bonus equal to 70 percent of that received by the chairman. The brigadiers and other carmen were automatically credited with 1.5 times the number of brigades achieved by the average bookkeeper plus various bonuses.²² Thus an important part of the available resources of the kolkhozes was absorbed by the managing council, the operators - the brigadiers and administrative cadres²³ which corresponded to one of the norms of the "ordinance" but which without sufficiently detailed and meaningful statistics is very difficult to make a true comparison between the income inequalities in the countryside at the end of NE² and the end of the 1910s. However, nothing suggests that these inequalities had diminished. What changed were those who benefited from the privileged incomes and the conditions which allowed them to thus benefit. It should be noted that the inequalities in the incomes distributed by the kolkhozes should be added other inequalities which increased after the collectivization of standards of life within the kolkhozes.

One of these sources of inequality involved housing. Thus A. Arutyunyan writing on investigation made in 1913 in the village of Terpenye (located in the Ukraine in Kurskaya Region), states that there were considerable differences in the amount of room that depended on whether it was used by skilled or unskilled workers. All the administrators of non-manual skilled workers had private houses whereas 41 percent of the kolkhoz dwellers had nothing more than simple, thatched dwellings usually situated in small colonies of huts often belonging essentially to unskilled manual workers.²⁴

Another element in the differentiation of living conditions was the size of family and culture. Thus in 1920 one third of kolkhoz families did not have a child; however the reproduction of a collective farm in 1928 of a peasant household because this animal was essential for providing the peasant household with milk products. The latter were necessary for nourishment and were a source of revenue in order

moreover stable manure was an important factor for the fertility of the plots.

The available information shows that the households of the manual workers were the least favored in questions of live-stock rearing and plots. Thus at Terpeniye, in 1933, in the kolkhoz sector, 100 percent of "skilled non-manual workers grew their own crops and had an ox herd whereas these percentages fell respectively to 31 and 70 percent for unskilled manual workers."²²

To summarize the "collective" farm was characterized by a very much polarized social structure by deep economic inequalities, and by relationships of domination that a minority of cadres exercised on the mass of kolkhozniks who were over exploited and literally reduced to short rations. However, these facts should not hide the circumstance that in the overall social structure, the cadres and managers of the kolkhozes were themselves at the bottom of a complex hierachical system whose pressures forced them to push to a maximum the exploitation of the "ordinary" kolkhozniks. The inferior situation of the cadres of the "collective" farms can be clearly seen when analysing the subordination of the kolkhozes to the requirements of accumulation and state procurement.

V. The subordination of the kolkhozes to the requirements of state accumulation

As is known, the kolkhoz system comprised three elements: familial agriculture, the kolkhoz and the collection of administrative structures which dominated the kolkhoz and allowed the state to obtain from agriculture a "tribute" which was maximal and as high as possible. The principle function of the system was to contribute to the growth of accumulation in the state sector.

The subordination of the "collective farms" to a collection of administrative structures placed above them was made necessary by the heavy and contradictory obligations which weighed on the kolkhozes. For example, the latter had "to assure the state sector of the material means required by the plan."

of accumulation at the same time they had to "satisfy the needs for extra labor power" which the industrialization process demanded. These two requirements came into contradiction when an excessively intense drainage of labor-power from agriculture to industry disorganized agriculture production and threatened the supply in the state of the material means necessary for accumulation.

These contradictions and the organizational forms through which they were treated during the 1930s are highly significant. They should therefore be examined in order to grasp what exactly was the overall kolkhoz system.

(a) The contradictions affecting the size and form of the "tribute" and the place of the kolkhozes in the system of state structures

From the beginning of collectivization there could be seen the development of a sharp contradiction between the effort of the state apparatus, seeking to maximize the material supplies currently delivered to the state by the kolkhozes and on the other side the effort aiming to increase this supply for subsequent years. This contradiction manifested itself in concrete terms during the first half of the 1930s when the tribute reached such a size that the standard of living of the kolkhozniks drastically fell which had a negative effect on their labor productivity and even on their numbers and hence resulted in poorer harvests.⁶²

At the beginning of the 1930s, the Party gave priority to the maximization of supplies currently extorted from the kolkhozes in the form of living conditions and output in the collective farms. To insure respect for this priority the kolkhoz system was submitted as much as possible to the directives and plans of the state and hence there was an extension of planning from above which was extended to the production and distribution of the kolkhozes. In this matter the latter were placed practically on the same footing as the state farms. The Party organization and the state fixed for the kolkhozes just as far the kolkhozes' sowing plans for different products and they installed a control system which aimed to force the kolkhozes

to achieve their plan for production and delivery. The ~~more~~ ^{more} character of autonomy that the collective farms ~~were~~ ^{were} said to enjoy therein became clear from the First Five Year Plan and was confirmed during the Second Plan. What happened during the 1940s & early 1950s moreover that the kolkhozes were subordinated to the Party but the form of this subordination varied over time.

At the beginning of collectivization the responsibility of drawing and controlling the kolkhozes lay principally at least formally on the machine and tractor stations (MTS) although the local Party authorities (at district level) were supposed to supervise the operations of the MTS.

There was here a sort of confusion of responsibilities. In January 1933 Lenin of the CC sought to eliminate this by creation of functional political departments affiliated to MTS.²⁰ The political department (polotdel) was a Party organization directly subordinated to the CC and not to the secretary of the district committee. Thus the kolkhozes were under direction of the senior Party offices. The head of the polotdel was deputy director of the MTS and each polotdel had a representative at each of the CP who therefore now participated the management of collective agriculture.

The executive character of the kolkhoz that Stalin wanted in 1937²¹ then became especially famous on January 1939 that is with something quite different. He then stated that the Party must now take over the direction of the collective farms giving responsibility for their work "as much as possible" all the details of collective farms etc.²²

This taking in hand took the form of constant interference in kolkhoz affairs very numerous efforts of breaking up and merging individual farms has led not to a change in the style of kolkhoz management but rather to a strengthening of their subordination. At the beginning of 1941 a decree of March 4 ordered the main state organs of agriculture the MTS and the kolkhozes to carry out their functions according to a plan. The government additionally promulgated a similar plan for the collective farms and (was stated) that this plan should be followed without any deviation. The key element of this plan were the mandatory deliveries to the state (from 1942 these deliveries replaced the old kontrolans).

power. The particular subject was not long in showing itself. It was stated in particular that certain local agricultural committees had a tendency to protect the kolkhozes from which they had responsibility against the members of the Party at the various places. Certain high leaders of the Party, who began to talk of anti-state tendencies.¹⁴ Thus the Central Committee in September 1934 abolished the so-called system, i.e., the MTS retained a deputy director with responsibility for all powers but the latter did not have his own administrative apparatus and had no direct authority over power organizations to the local Party organization.

However, the kolkhozes continued to occupy a very important position in the system of administration of agriculture connected with the management of agriculture and the financial control of the state or those agricultural products output by which determines the costs of the kolkhozes were in an inverse relation to the triangle. This was supposed to produce better results. This triangle consisted of Party officials, government officials and the kolkhoz cadres representing the kolkhozes.

The list of governmental organizations to which the affairs of the kolkhozes were in practice handed over included the MTS which was kolkhoz liaison for the state and works, the executive committee of the district and county agricultural bureaus, and the local organizations of the National Commissariat. These organizations participated in the preparation of plans and the linking of their execution with actual operations. The superintendents were attached to the MTS and the Agricultural Committee. They were the executive committee of the district and county agricultural bureaus which included a post for the kolkhozes. The posts were distributed to the latter through the chairman of the MTS and the local organizations of the Agricultural Committee. They had the following tasks in the matter of agriculture: the systematic distribution of crops, fixtures and tools; the organization of working of various enterprises and auxiliary units of the kolkhoze; the kolkhoz and that of the kolkhoz against the state. The kolkhoz could not make any movement against the state as agreed by the government and the kolkhoz were obliged to submit to the central organs of power and to pay taxes to the state according to legal regulations.

kolkhoz could submit only projects to the Party district committees or to the regional administration of the locality.⁷² But it had to be the kolkhoz which could elaborate a plan project for supplementary investments specifying the material means human and financial that its achievement required. This project had to conform to official directives. It was submitted to the local organization of the Agricultural Commission which could modify it. The modification he carried out also gave the kolkhoz a degree of autonomy in the kolkhoz plan and it became obligatory. The regulation fixed in this way referred to a minimum the freedom of action of the kolkhozes and their managements.

Despite the apparently important role that state organizations particularly the Agricultural Commission played in the Party organizations which occupied the dominant position in the management and control of kolkhoz activities, through a principle they were not supposed to interfere in production problems. In fact they did not, manifested in actual affairs even in the persons whom such a reference was encouraged by the central leadership of the Party as was the case in 1936 when Stalin emphasized in a speech of February 23 that the kolkhozes should be left with the solution of their own problems and the administrative decisions should not be imposed upon them.

The intervention of the party in kolkhoz affairs was linked with the burdens that weighed upon the kolkhoz economy. To ensure that the latter would not become bankrupt the party committee intervened at all moments in kolkhoz farm affairs. At the beginning of 1940 the situation was such that Preysa was reporting that "in the kolkhozes there was no accounting and no bookkeeping due to the lack of an agriculture office."⁷³

The duties of state Party organizations increased a great deal in the life of the kolkhozes because they were obliged to hold responsible for the conduct of agriculture in their districts. Finally at the beginning of the 1950s his responsibility was officially placed on them. First, a decree of March 14, 1951 charged the commissar with organizing organizations. Then at the beginning of 1951 the commissar was charged with organization of kolkhozes and directly supervising the administration of Party and government functions in the districts.

Thus there developed an extremely heavy agricultural administration. It was so extensive that on the eve of WWI there were more cadres not belonging to kolkhozes but occupied in the management of the latter than there were kolkhoz chairmen.²²

In these circumstances the kolkhoz was reduced to the role of a simple organ of implementation. It was not only the kolkhoznik who was left aside from all control and organization of production,²³ but also the chairman of the kolkhoz himself who was only the executant of the decisions made by the raikom and the raionspolkom.²⁴

(b) The real scope of the kolkhoz cooperative statute

Ultimately the kolkhoz cooperative statute was based on a fiction, because the fundamental principles that this statute implied were not respected. In fact all the decisions important for the life of the kolkhoz were decided externally and in advance by the Party and government organizations. Such was the case for the deductions made from kolkhoz funds for the terms of work decentralization, for the form of remuneration, etc. All these questions gave rise to decisions taken outside the kolkhoz and which had to be accepted by him after including, when appropriate, the general assembly of kolkhozniks.²⁵ The latter then functioned as a means of fictitiously transforming a decision taken outside the kolkhoz into a decision 'unanimously adopted' by the kolkhozniks, thereby conferring a legitimacy which otherwise it would not have had. This form of 'legitimacy' is typical of Soviet democracy of the 1930s. The authorities could bring this about as soon as they disposed of means of pressure like the expulsion or even arrest of representatives that was sufficient to allow the constraint on the 'consensus' to bring about constraint 'by the consensus'.

Naturally the constant violation of the kolkhoz statutes did not solve any deep problem. It could only make their management more bureaucratic, more remote from production realities and more conflict ridden. Hence the soft-treatment reminders

from the Party leadership that the cooperative character of the kolkhoz should be respected. But these considerations were in contradiction with other considerations demanding that local authorities should interfere even in the details of agriculture. These contradictions between two official documents only reflect objective contradictions. The latter were born from the need to extract a maximum tribute from the kolkhoz to support the current policy of accumulation and industrialisation. However this need entered into conflict with the nature of the personality which tried to keep for itself the largest part of the product of its labor. At every moment it gave either a contradiction with another necessity, that of maintaining a generally increasing the productive capacity of the kolkhoz.

The kolkhoz chairman found himself at the center of these contradictions. On the one hand his task was to respond respectively to the requirements of the central authorities. On the other he was it often one of the main off-duty party's tasks to see to it that he was paid to no extent by the kolkhozists. On the other hand he had to deal with mounting requirements of the kolkhoz and the discontent of the kolkhozists. To a certain point he had to satisfy the demands of the latter to cause failure to do so made it impossible to fulfil the collective labor. These contradictions forced the provincial kolkhoz chairmen all the more demands because the obligation which that was imposed on them was to guarantee that the kolkhoz first and above all a provider of as much surplus labor as possible.

The bittersweet nature of the kolkhoz cooperation is also seen in the contradictions in which these functions were involved and demonstrated throughout the 1930s and on the eve of the war by the work of the kolkhoz chairmen. The first reason was caused by the attempts made by several of them to make excessive demands by the Party and in the wake of this effort to shelter such its state. Some figures show the scale of phenomenon. In 1933 an investigation carried out in the Soviet part of the territory of the USSR showed that in the course of the single year 46,000 new kolkhoz chairmen were chosen. In 1937 46 percent of these chairmen had been replaced less than 1 year.¹ Figures of the same order - but the latest 1939 and 1940².

These figures adequately confirm the main deductions in the Bolshevik system and the fictitious character of the cooperative statute of the "collective farms".

VI The Consequences for the Authorities of the "Collectivization" of Agriculture

For the authorities the socialization of agriculture emerged by way of two failures and four victories but the scope of the latter was much greater than that of the failures.

The first failure involved the main agricultural products which it proved more difficult to collectivize than Soviet leaders had hoped to see realized. In numerous sectors collectivized agriculture was subjected to a near permanent crisis. In the kolkhoz production after having sharply diminished at the beginning of the 1930s only increased thereafter slightly and with difficulty. The eventual harvest that of grain did not regain its 1910 level before World War I. Thus agriculture far from ending its support to general economic development became a sector which hindered that development.

The second failure involved the relationship of the authorities with the peasantry. In effect the expropriation of the peasant masses their incorporation into the system that reduced them to starvation rations and what imposed on them forced labor which was hardly remunerated around and renewed deep and long term peasant discontent. Discontent was all the greater because although he were constantly suspected of laziness and of "desert" in addition they felt themselves numbered and put by the authorities at the very bottom of the social ladder both in terms of the income that they received and of the degree of "respect" that the authorities accorded them. Taken as a whole the peasantry was discriminated against in relation to the state it had duties but no rights. Bolshevik ideology was already the vehicle of such discrimination but toward the end of the 1930s it tended to more and more reinforce the anti-kolkhoz and anti-peasant tradition. Like many other aspects of this epoch it became part of the resurgence of conservatism and even reactionary attitudes that had characterized imperial Russia.

The peasants made their discontent felt by direct opposition and passive resistance. The authorities responded to this with a new and by creating at all points a broad front that the peasants and the kulaks were carefully watched from their part in their exploitation. This new privileged class was a ministered factually quite hardly as the agricultural state farms and the M.S. kolkhozes absorbed considerable investment whose returns were density.

In its collectivization, far from helping to pull the country into national economic life only cut off further the link from the peasantry. More than ever, the country was split into two nations, the New Soviets on the other side of the social strata. This would not prevent when the Hitlerites came larger during World War II these 'soviets' defending the land gone under the old regime.¹

However the crisis of agriculture and the profound crisis of the peasants were the price that the authorities of the new dominant class had to pay in order to win their victory.

The first victory was political. Collectivization did not cut off the authorities from the peasantry but above all it was what counted: it shattered this latter economically and politically. Collectivization put an end to all peasant's economic independence for the peasants. It shattered the traditional peasant institutions and the types of society. In the latter permitted in effect collectivization to work being a peasantry infinitely more organized and more easily capitalist forms of the division of labor than the individualized peasantry had been.

For the authorities and for the new dominant class the elimination of private peasant holdings, whether they pose or average peasants completely off or not, was a great victory. Even more so the N.P. members had also been eliminated; the new law alone had at its disposal no legal means of production.

For the Bolshevik Party thanks to its ideology (in which also taken root a Leninist tradition) it has always upheld the balance of forces was regarded in terms of a factor of capitalism in the name of a genetic theory of capitalism greatly and inevitably engendered by small-scale production.

The second victory won by the authorities and the new dominant class was their success in submitting the peasantry to an unprecedented over-exploitation, which permitted the realization of a gigantic effort of accumulation most of which went to industry. True this was obtained at the price of a very substantial lowering of the living standard of the peasant masses but this consequence was regarded as negligible. It was even officially ignored for what counted for the Party leadership and for the class whose interests it served was putting the maximum means of production under its own control.

The third victory, which made the others long lasting was the creation of a new economic form the kolkhoz system which allowed simultaneously the organization of the peasantry and the transformation of its "individual and sparse means of production into socially concentrated means of production following the methods belonging to the pretenders of capital".

As has been seen, the kolkhoz system included central agriculture the kolkhozes, and the collection of administrative structures which directed and controlled the latter. It constituted a system *ex generis* for the exploitation of the great mass of agricultural workers. It combined characteristics which were those of a kind of state serfdom and galley work on the collective land and the attachment of the peasant to the soil with a capitalist sector relationship. These latter were evident in the form of the work process and in the extraction of surplus labor destined essentially to the accumulation of capital in the state sector. The existence of individual plots and free work far from being in contradiction with the demands of such a accumulation, on the contrary allowed it to immensely as in the case of different types of agrarian capitalism (for example in the capitalist plantations of Latin America).

The kolkhoz system was established on the basis of the 1920s kolkhozes and in those of the old communalist type. It constituted a relatively stable form as witness the fact that it still exists half a century after its beginnings. The capitalist social relationship where exploitation in this system assumed allowed the kolkhozes to press the members in closer and closer to those of an ordinary capitalist enterprise.

this is what happened from 1958 when the kolkhoz could purchase its own means of production (ceasing them to depend on the MTS), and then later, when the kolkhoz could pay a wage to the kolkhozniks. But these later transformations did not in any way make the kolkhoz "independent" in regard to the Party and the state. They only modified the forms of its dependence.

Finally the fourth victory won by the authorities during the 1930s took the form of its transformation of the Soviet rural population into an immense "reserve industrial army" which provided millions of workers who could be integrated (voluntarily or not) into the development of industry and the town. The development took place in the course of other struggles which will now be examined.

Notes

1. For the scale of kolkhozes in 1940, and their equipment see A.Kh., 1958g., pp. 494, 495, 505.
2. It may be recalled that in November 1929 a special commission appointed by the CC had already recommended that there should be maintained individual plots and livestock for each kolkhoznik but this recommendation had then been rejected (See V.P. Danilov ed. *Ocherki po istorii kolkhozov na stoyanii ikh sovremennoi v sotsialisticheskikh respublikakh* (Moscow 1963, p. 19 and B.A. Abramov in VT 1964 P. 40). Certain provisions of the new statute were badly received by many kolkhozniks (See for example a letter sent to Stalin in N. Werth *Une communiste en URSS sous Staline* (Paris, 1961), pp. 176-77).
3. See above, Chapter 2, note 23.
4. In fact the reality in town - country relationship was never bowed to the 'decisions' of the authorities. Even in 1931 when the private free market for food products was practically illegal, it represented a turnover of 8.5 billion rubles (an increase of more than 50 percent over 1930). This figure equalled about 40 percent of the turnover achieved for the same products by the cooperatives and urban state shops. See *Mnichennyi funktsiya selskohoziaistvennykh i SSSR (1917-1963)* (Moscow 1964), and also *Strogiy reyt sotsialisticheskoi torgovli* (Moscow 1935 p. 42).
5. See J. Whitman 'The Kolkhoz Market' in *Soviet Studies*, April 1958 pp. 384-403. The abolished tax was replaced by a 3 percent duty (See B. Kerthay in *Marchen*, p. 127).
6. In fact these were the kolkhozniks who were involved in cattle raising and wanted the latter to be individual - hoping to thereby ensure that

These two significantly correlated highly α -centred topographic measures of the remaining visual structures. The significant positive correlation between the two measures suggests a common underlying mechanism that can be interpreted as being due to all the measures of visual structure operating together.

- 31 In those different points which were current problems for most of the units in the villages. In October 1928 Kaganovitch and others sought the support of the peasants in the struggle against the富农.⁴¹ The next day word of peasant uprisings in the countryside was received in Moscow from N. A. Tikhonov and G. A. Sosulin (members of the Central Executive Committee, Economic Commissar and N. K. Dzerzhinsky), and on 12 October the Central Committee issued a decree.⁴²
- 32 See a similar reference in K. P. Molotov's *Pravogardist* pp. 21, notes 23 and 31.
- 33 During 1928 in the first Five Year Plan the main agreement of the Bolsheviks was to redistribute land to small-scale tillers so as to increase the output of grain and build collective farms for the large-scale grain-growing areas. These changes largely came through the work of the presidents of agricultural districts. This change was mainly successful, but the local associations were opposed to the large-scale collectivization. The local associations of the富农 units would have had to play a major role in a worsening of the agricultural situation.
34. In the period up to the 1st Plenary Conference and A. Yerofeyev's article in *Pravogardist* (pp. 2-3) that of N. Dzerzhinsky in those areas where the富农 were the other tax-payers (in Kazakhstan, Turkestan, etc.)⁴³ The working members with greater proportion of returned ex-servicemen and former members of the Party and government leadership,⁴⁴ i.e. Communists known as 'local communists' No. 3 (1931) p. 152.
- 35 See A. Voznesensky, *The Peasant Structure of Soviet Democracy* (Moscow 1914), pp. 9-10.
- 36 The ultimate administrative problems of the富农 dilemma are discussed by A. Voznesensky in 1916 (pp. 11-20) and K. Molotov's *Pravogardist* pp. 188-93.
- 37 N. Khan 1958, p. 349.
- 38 See the report to Molotov in the *Eightheenth Party Congress*.
- 39 In 1928 much was decided between the districts by the districts themselves. In some cases there was contact from one with another to make a judgement. A very favourable judgement is often reached involving both A. Management and the formation of permanent brigades. This suggests that the principles of the law and the character of the experience are identical. A brigade consisted of a number of units and the size varied in type. The brigades were appointed by the district management and had a certain legal status. They were appointed for two or three years and in principle could be easily dismissed with the agreement of the chief representatives of the Agricultural Committee of the local people (see I. Rukhovich and Schuricht, *A Peasant Management in Russia in Politics and Agriculture* (London 1944), pp. 140-50).
- 40 A. Arshavin, *Soviet rural structure* p. 111, also has notes to his work (1954) concerning the head of the commune and p. 16, and in the 'Agricultural Population and its structure' section of *Pravogardist* (Moscow 1960), p. 141.
- 41 Yu. S. Kuznetsov, *ibidem* p. 111 and *Pravogardist* (Moscow 1958), p. 81.

- 45 It would be tedious to analyse the rights to land and its returns in the kolkhozes. In fact we have already given some indications of the nature of agricultural production and in the price paid by the state for production. As we shall see later what were the rewards given to kolkhoz members. Those wishing to study the 1931 is the way in which it changed the distribution of income in kind and in money of the kolkhozes may refer to H. Vronsky Remuneration p. 9. See also M. A. Arutyunyan's note published in *Kolkhoznye kreditnomye krestyanskye s'ezdy i ikh posledstviya* in No. 9 (1963) p. 16 which quotes an interview with a Kolkhoznoye Kreditnoye Konsulat.
- 46 On these various points, see Organizational Trade & Distribution (1931), the speech of Ya. Kozlov on March 14, 1931 in *Soviet Economy* (Kirovskiy 1931); M. A. Krav Pobeda kolkhoznogo chlena (Moscow 1934); H. Vronsky Remuneration pp. 22-23; R. Hirsch et al. *Agricultural Management*, pp. 127ff.
- 47 In Soviet rural structure, p. 116 table 22 A Arutyunyan gives a Soviet researcher who has published the most detailed studies of problems of the peasantry and agriculture (See the article in *Yearbook of Capital L. Evolution de la sociologie rurale en RSS de Moldova*, No. 22, 1976, pp. 42-65).
- 48 A. Arutyunyan, above
- 49 It will be noted that 1940 is less favorable to the peasant than 1939 which, according to official statistics, a kolkhoz household could receive 12 rubles per year plus 12 quintals of grain (see *Sovetskaya Moldova* No. 10, 1939, p. 7033; *Moldost*, Moscow 1939, p. 116) and *Izbrannye rechi nauchno-tekhnicheskoye zhurnala* No. 76, p. 59 quoted by A. Novik in *Russian History*, p. 244-245.
- 50 A. N. Matulevici *istorika kommunisticheskoy partii Belorusii* p. 413 (1977).
- 51 See A. Novik *An Economic History* p. 249. Note that in 1937-1938 the average money payment per kolkhozian was respectively 10.4 and 12.4 rubles (See above, p. 244).
- 52 Decree of December 31, 1940.
- 53 See C. Ilyina et al. *Management* pp. 155ff.
- 54 See above, p. 167.
- 55 See above, pp. 167-168.
- 56 In 1937 before the introduction of the bonus system described above existing organs reckoned that administrative costs in settlements were still part of the peasants' share. At 25 percent of the total income (See above, p. 168) a decree of September 10, 1937 then limited this item of expense.
- 57 A. Arutyunyan's work translated in *Archives Internationales d'Etudes Soviétiques*, p. 142.
- 58 K.E. Wedekin, *Führungskräfte*, p. 38.
- 59 See M. Lewin, *The Kolkhoz*.
- 60 A. Arutyunyan in *Archives Internationales d'Etudes Soviétiques* p. 16.
- 61 In an article titled 'Some thoughts on Soviet Agricultural Administration' in *Studies on the Soviet Union* (1964 New Series v. III, No. 4) A. Novik observes 'The Party and state interest was directed to the

three main objectives which were sometimes interrelated with one another to get maximum output or agricultural production or contribution to economy and hence the peasants and society to increase output and efficiency."

- 62 This responsibility was confirmed by a decree of February 1 1920 See A
 Note, *An Economic History*, p. 162

63 KPSS (1953), p. 730 ff

64 See for example Stalin's speeches of March 26 and June 29 1921
 Stalin's speech of January 11 1921 See his Works Vol 13 pp 226-79
 On this point see the remarks of writers such as Kostrov P Prolyshev
 and I Voznesensky quoted by Zemtsov in *Soviet Russia No 28* p 32 and A
 Note, *An Economic History*
 KPSS (1953), pp 803 ff

65 See C Bierstock et al Management pp 159-60

66 Pravda, March 22, 1940

67 Partinoye struzh'ivo, No. 10, 1941, p. 4

68 See C Bierstock et al Management p 133

69 As Pravda described it from 1930 (Pravda April 8 1930)
 Two sets of six horses per team therefore 120 May 6 1937

70 On his point see C Bierstock et al Management p 145

71 See M A Levin in V No 9 1958 p 6 and I E Zel'man in *AK NARK*
 No 5 1964 p 6 and I F Kara in *The Soviet Rural Community* p 104
 See PS No 1 1941 p 37 No 8 p 45 No 10 p 9

72 These various points are well illuminated in M Levin *The Bolsheviks*
 (On his point see the comments of M Levin in R C Tucker *Stalinism*
 New York 1977) particularly pp 120-26

73 This theory was insistently invoked by the leading group of the Party as
 when it was decided to liquidate NEP and it was useful for enunciating
 the communisms that were repeated throughout the 1930s From October
 1930 Stalin took great care to ensure that this theory was seen as emanating
 from Lenin In his speech 'Against the Rightist Threat' Stalin cited
 allusion to two texts He first recited that at odds with Lenin the
 strength of capitalism resided in the strength of small scale production
 which gives birth 100 million a day after day hour after hour spontaneously
 and on a massive scale to capitalism on the bourgeoisie See
 Lenin's 'The Unfinished Diseases of Capitalism' of April 1921 in his
Socruerisya Vol 25 (Moscow 1957, p 172) Stalin then recited
 another of Lenin's texts.

As long as we live it a small peasant country there is a much
more basis for capitalism in Russia than for communism.

The strength of small production engenders capitalism and the bourgeois are continuously daily having spontaneously and at a mass scale. Works Vol II pp 316-37 quoting Lenin's (December 1920 report to the Eighth Party Congress)

PART 2

The militarized working class

As has been shown, the 1930s were marked by a major upheaval in the conditions of life in the country's de-social relationships that had been characteristic of peasant life were destroyed and replaced by new exploitative relationships of domination. Millions of workers had to leave the places where they had been born in order to go elsewhere, often without hope of return.

The migrations took many and confused turns, making it impossible to examine them all separately. In practice they can be divided into two big categories, non-penal and penal migrations (the latter imposed by courts or by the GPU or NKVD). The former could be more or less voluntary (that is those who migrated did so by spontaneous decision for economic reasons or for fear of repression). At the same, the non-penal migrations could also be imposed on certain workers (for example, on those who became a target for the 'organized recruitment' within the framework of organization).

Above all, the non-penal migrations helped the process of urbanization and the creation of a salariat which was not usually the case with penal migrations since the latter led the migrants to prisons, camps and regions that were often thinly populated where they were made to live, and they were usually allocated to work which might or might not be of a penal type. Nevertheless even penal migrations which took migrants to a camp did not necessarily exclude the payment of a wage, and they could therefore also result in an apparent 'urbanization'. especially when enormous camps were formed. so much so that one could attribute the progress of urbanization to non-penal migrations alone.

Notes

- 1 See below, the first part of the following chapter.
- 2 It is almost certain that part of the "urban" population of the sites belonged in fact to the labor camp population. "Urban" population was defined according to quantitative criteria (agglomerations of 5,000 people or more, or even 3,000 or more if there were industrial activities present). Many of the camps fell into these categories. For example, it is known that in 1938 the Vorkuta camp (*Vorkutpochlag*) comprised 16,508 people, of whom 15,141 were prisoners. These figures, and others, were established by P. L. Negretov, who worked in a Vorkuta mine from 1945-1960 and who had access to the camp archives, whose documents he quotes with precision. Negretov is a historian still living at Vorkuta. His work has circulated in the form of *Samizdat* in the journal *XXV let*. An article "How Vorkuta Began" was translated and published (with the help of Zh. Medvedev) who sent it in *Soviet Studies*, No. 4, Vol. XXI, pp. 565-75. The question of whether part of the prison camp population was enumerated as "urban population" in the census is controversial. The main lines of this controversy can be seen by referring to S. Reshetnikov, "An Assessment of the Sources and Uses of Gulag Forced Labour," in *Soviet Studies*, No. 1, Vol. XXXIII Jan 1981, pp. 51ff, and S. G. Whitcroft, "On Assessing the Size of Forced Concentration Camp Labour in the Soviet Union 1929-1956," in *Soviet Studies*, April 1981, pp. 105ff.

The urbanization process

DURING the 1930s the Soviet Union experienced an accelerated growth of towns, conforming to the capitalist laws of urbanization. In spite of numerous declarations no serious effort was made to halt the development of big towns to which immigrants from the rural areas came - no heaped themselves up without anything coherent being done to find housing for them. Thus millions of workers were obliged to live in barracks sheds and enormous dormitories lacking any kind of comfort while others increased the density of occupation of older places of residence already crowded, or found a place in corrals, & tunnels, shared basements.

Some figures give an indication of the scale of the urbanization process. According to official statistics between 1926 (the 1930 census year) the urban population grew from 17.1 million to 56.1 million a growth of 112 percent. In the same years while the total population grew from 147.0 to 170.8 million, and in the same years the population of Moscow grew from 2.1 to 4.7 million and of Leningrad from 1.7 to 3.2 million. The population of the Moscow periphery grew by more than three times. The twelve cities which in 1926 exceeded 200,000 inhabitants witnessed a population growth of around 90 percent, while several towns of 150,000 or more (like Kurganica and Magnitogorsk) surged during this period.¹

4. Urbanization and population movement

The extremely rapid growth of the urban population was above all the consequence of a great migration. According to Lommer's estimates the natural growth¹ of the urban population should have allowed the latter to reach, at a maximum, the figure of 12.4 million. At a minimum, therefore, those who had migrated to the towns would have numbered 23 million.²

Two remarks might be made at this point:

a) Migrations from countryside to towns were only a part of the total migratory flow. To calculate the latter there would need to be added (something which the statistician does not allow) migrations between towns as well as migrations between rural regions.³ To obtain the total of migrants several millions would need to be added to the 23 million which according to Lommer is the net balance of country-town migration.

b) The figure of 23 million undoubtedly underestimates these latter migrations, because several indices suggest that the natural increase of the urban population was less than Lommer's estimation. In fact after 1927 this increase fell rapidly. It was even apparently negative, notably in 1930 and 1931.⁴ This was, among other things, one of the consequences of the departure at the beginning of the first five-year Plan of a part of the urban workers, who went to the countryside with the intention of defending their families against the threat of Dekulakazation. But above all during much of the 1930s it was a result of the decline of urban living standards, of the food-supply crisis and of the housing situation at a time when abortion was unrestricted. The consequent fall in the birth rate led the Soviet government to end 'freedom of abortion' in 1936.⁵

In any case whatever the figures that are looked at, one thing is certain: during these years millions of workers were uprooted. They had to establish themselves in largely hundreds of thousands of kilometers away from their places of origin. Among these workers were millions who were forced to migrate to particularly inhospitable regions like the Far North and Eastern Siberia. However, most of the migration in these latter regions had a penal nature and in no way contributes to urbanization. It was a consequence above all of the deportations discussed in Chapter 1 of this Part 2.

To return to the non-penal migrations their extraordinary scale was due mainly to the brutal destruction of old peasant relationships in the countryside and to the decline of village living conditions. This is what drew millions of men away from their conditions of existence and impelled them to go to seek work far from their places of birth to 'put themselves at the service' of an industrialisation process which in fact was not under the control of those who seemed to be its managers.

Realistically speaking these migrations were due alone at to the way in which collectivization took place. It has been seen how at the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s collectivization was accompanied by repressive measures applied on a large scale. Very many peasants at this time fled from their villages to escape the risk of repression and its consequences (in particular deportation). The flow of peasants leaving their villages for fear of being regarded as bandits or classed with bandits (under the 'non-peasant' heading) was enlarged still further by the circumstance that those so labeled were usually refused membership of kolkhozes. In which case even if they were not deported they were deprived of some or all of their implements and obliged to live on and at times the village and often forced to hand to the authorities a large proportion of their products preferred to migrate to the towns.

The migratory flow was also due to non-repressive economic causes. For example the failure at the end of the first Five Year Plan which struck a vital of the peasantry and the decline in village living conditions made many peasants turn to the cities. In the latter they hoped to find a less intolerable life but this was not always the case at all.

During the Second Five Year Plan the set of repressive measures and the yearning for an escape from living conditions which were especially worsening in the countryside continued to feed a migration from town village to town. In reality these voluntary migrations often depicted the countryside areas of the labour force needed to ensure adequate harvests hence the measures taken to extend the period of the labour contract and cancellation of the internal passport on December 1, 1932.¹⁴

Despite this scale the voluntary migrations did not always suffice to provide the required numbers of urban workers. The

authorities took various measures to cope with the shortage of labor which then arose. One of the most significant developed from 1930 when the scale of migration, although substantial, was not enough to provide the needs of industrialization. This measure was known as "organized recruitment" or *organizat* *pravozhdeniye rabov rabochikh*.

The first references to the *organizat* appeared in the Soviet press at the beginning of 1930. Thus a decree of this period sought to regulate this type of recruitment (which was at that time basically directed toward seasonal labor requirements). The regulations established by this decree were in fact followed later.

According to those regulations, the kolkhozes were obliged to provide the number of workers fixed by the plan. To look after the details of the operations recruiting agents were sent into the countryside. Kolkhoz managers designated those kolkhozniki who would have to leave and go into industry. A refusal of a kolkhoznik to obey the order received was punished as an act of insubordination and an infraction of work regulations. From a period of the press it would appear that the recruiting operations did not always proceed smoothly, thanks to the resistance of a section of the peasants and also the kolkhoz managers. Sometimes the latter demanded that 10-50 percent of the wages due to kolkhozniks employed in industry should be given to the kolkhoz. This practice was expressly condemned by the regulations promulgated at that time, whatever less favorable outcome it had on the basis of 10 percent of a migrant's wage.

In March 1931 the *organizat* was reorganized and passed to the authority of the economic administration of labor over the industrial enterprises (which negotiated directly with the kolkhozes). The Labor Committee of the republics organized labor protection structures so as to avoid competition.

The new system largely resulted from a combination of several circumstances:

On the one hand, from the unprecedented size of the labor demand by the heavy mines and new construction sites before 1931; if the countryside had never had to provide a majority in terms of workers for non-agricultural tasks, on the other hand, different causes (existing according to the official

wanted to hold back the rural exodus. For example some kolkhoz managers who faced heavy compulsion to supply demands received in part with kolkhozes where work was indispensable for the meeting of those burdensome obligations. Certain kolkhoz managers then imposed sanctions on those who left to work in the towns. Such sanctions took varying and sometimes illegal forms and included fines, confiscation of property and/or the immediate expulsion of the families of departed peasants.

In a speech to industrial managers on June 2, 1931 Stalin drew attention to the importance of organizing. He said that industry could no longer rely on spontaneous inflow from the countryside to provide sufficient labor power and he emphasized that it was necessary to move to a form of organized recruitment. He issued to the industrial managers the order to "recruit manpower in an organized way, by means of contracts with the collective farms."

In his June 23 speech Stalin explained the exhaustion of spontaneous rural emigration in terms of improvement in the peasantry's situation.¹⁴ Analysis of the decline in the situation experienced at that time in the Soviet countryside shows that this explanation was completely false.

Shortly after the speech of Stalin the has just been quoted there appeared a decree ("Instruction") which regulated emigration with more precision.¹⁵ The kolkhozes which provided the workers had the right to compensation in the form of materials and credits. Deductions from the savings accounts were really forbidden (although in reality this did not prevent such deductions continuing). The rights of kolkhoz members of emigrant families were not to be reduced henceforth to those of each kolkhoz which had to sign personally a short contract. However provision was made that if there was not a sufficient number of volunteers the kolkhoz management could take coercive measures.

It should be noted that the contract signed by the resulting organs included understanding that often could not be observed. The trade union paper went so far as to state that these contracts could be nothing more than a "scrap of paper". Workers were never forced required to respect them if they informed him they were considered guilty of an economic offense.

Article 31 of the Penal Code) and could be tried in accordance with a summary procedure.¹⁰

After 1934 and especially after 1935, when the right of return was to a private plot and private livestock was confirmed, presents were less inclined to emigrate to the towns than they had been in the early 1930s. In the towns housing conditions and food supply were difficult, while real wages had fallen considerably. So organized recruitment continued.

The first ulcers which this recruitment came up against led to various measures. Some envisaged putting pressure in the kolkhozes and the kulakhs by reducing their incomes substantially.¹¹ Others reorganized the recruitment of workers in the villages. For example, on July 21, 1938 a Sovnarkom decree changed 'the organized recruitment'. This decree created a central commission of organization with similar commissions at republican and regional levels. These commissions established quotas for workers to be supplied by regions and districts and divided them among the commissariats, the latter dividing their quotas between their enterprises.¹² Apparently, this new organization permitted a more regular arrival of the labor thus recruited.¹³ The wage earner henceforth benefited from an advance of wages and from paid travel expenses. Nevertheless the quota amounted to a form of 'united labor'.¹⁴

In spite of the measures taken, some of which granted certain advantages to the workers recruited by organizers and others of which imposed penalties on those who did not observe the contracts made by the representatives of recruiting organizations, the resistance of workers to what was a form of forced recruitment often took the form of a refusal to turn up at the assigned place of work, or by a change of enterprise despite the regulations. Moreover the activity of the organizers involved so many workers that it was no bad measure to fully guarantee the recruitment envisaged by the plan. Thus in 1939 2.6 million kolkhozniiks were to have been recruited in the RSFSR but only 1.7 million actually were and of the latter 1.5 million showed up at their place of work.¹⁵

In sum, the urbanization process was a combination and under control of voluntary migration and organized recruitment. Hence the anarchical nature of this process.

II. The anarchic character of the urbanization process

The rural emigration and urbanization process was in accord with a policy which destroyed the old peasantry and atomized the working class. This policy gave pride of place to a strongly concentrated industry. It sought to achieve maximum accumulation and to create conditions for a significant enhancement of the workers' exploitation requirements. In its actual course, the urbanization process was for the most part uncontrolled. It suffered the effects of economic and social contradictions that had their own dynamics. Also urbanization did not develop according to the forecasts of the economic plans nor according to the needs of economic growth. In the latter grew faster than the plans had forecast especially as industrial labor productivity did not increase as the plans had specified.

The overfulfillment of targets of the first two Five-Year Plans as regards country to town migration is extremely indicative of the lack of control over the urbanization process. For example the First Plan envisaged that the urban population in 1933 would be 34.7 million whereas it reached 38.4 million at the end of 1932 (official date of the end of the first plan). Similarly the Second Plan foresees an urban population of 49.1 million at the end of 1937 but in fact it was 53.2 million.²³

From time to time the Soviet authorities worried about this development that was beyond their control. For example, at the beginning of 1933 *Izvestia* wrote:

The towns have grown by much from supply of urban agglomerations. Supplying of construction sites and the provision of necessary premises for the big centers pose problems which are complex and difficult to solve. Migrations of large masses of population seriously hinder the country's food supply, cause urban overpopulation and provoke an insurmountable housing crisis.²⁴

Such a situation reflected the uncontrolled nature of the migratory processes. It was to this lack of control that were

at toward the many administrative and economic controls
to be imposed, hence also contradictions. The former
passport, etc.

This did not prevent the agricultural development — the flow
of a population into the towns had considerable economic
and political consequences.

The enormous growth of the towns, thanks to the arrival
of a mass of peasants brought with it a kind of amalgamation
of urban life. In the towns or very large parts of the popu-
lation of certain towns were toward the end of 1936
immigrants of rural origin. The latter were pre-
pared to concern very different from those of being in towns.
They had different aspirations and a different way of life.
Moreover having been uprooted they were usually isolated
from one another. Often they came from different villages
and regions. They got to know each other only with diffi-
culty. Hence there was a virtual atomization of the urban
population exacerbated by the extreme material difficulties of
daily life.

The one-time rural folk who had just arrived in the towns
nearly had little sympathy for the government's and Party's
polices. In their eyes these policies were responsible for the
dramatic overthrow of their previous way of life. They had
to abandon their land, leave their villages and try to settle
themselves in an infantile world which they felt was harsh
and imposed many conditions for which they were not pre-
pared. Thus the relations between the Party and the urban
masses deteriorated badly.

In general the deterioration of living standards in the towns
and of working conditions in industry led to enhanced sufferings of the
urban masses — the ability of the workforce — in crafts
and hospitals — and a tendency toward indiscipline. The author
then resorted to his situation by severe measures that sought
to stifle every sign of individual or collective resistance
on the part of these masses. These measures were not limited simply to police
and penal repression, but also included deep changes in the
conditions that burdened industrial workers. Consequently
may be said that the urbanization process had as its corollary
not only the development of a wage-earning class but also a
rigidifying of factory despotism.

* Notes

1. At the same time the public was educated by experience and practice to understand better than ever before that it was futility to suppose that a party can serve the cause well if it consists of bourgeois workers who had worked hard and done a good job who emigrated after April's War (July 22) to the countryside now leaving a void that in the 14 days will have been filled during my stay in the USSR in 1936.
2. See N. Kh., 1958g, p. 9.
3. See P. Lerner, *The peasant movement in Russia and Prospects* (Geneva, 1946), pp. 145ff.
4. See above, p. 150.
5. However the existing government is still of the mind of those three years. For example it is known that among the more educated in Ukraine last 16 percent of the adult population are given the title of expert, 17 percent the word 'young and dynamic' and only 12 percent the term 'working agricultural people' or 'peasant'. Therefore not more than 10 percent people by 1939 are left over from the educated and educated peasants whose titles were denied them in 1936 and now 11 of the 12 million which we have already written about were renamed by the new regime after all its disregard for a peasant's right to his land. Between 1936 and 1939 see above, p. 41. In fact the official statistics do not make a decent assessment of the former magnates. It is made clear that they are not in dispute with that class. Moreover it would be also relevant to this when we discuss forced labor.
6. See on this point the article of A. N. Krupskaya, *How to work in the USSR* (Paris, 1952), pp. 50-61.
7. It is known that in the beginning of 1930 the peasants wanted to sell their land and houses and to move to the cities. But they did not want to move here because they treated as bad as it did not fit in with the large towns because you cannot find there the standard form of private property, all confiscated as 'kulak property'.
8. From 1933 the press engaged in a campaign against students. A few times it claimed that the new being taught 'new' subjects obtained from abroad might not be compatible with what is taught in the old schools. In 1936 particularly attention was paid to what the program, just before the 17th Congress, contained in respect of organizing health of the peasants in danger as if there was a problem of organizing health of the aristocracy. A resolution from the Central Committee of the Communist Party to Tass stated: 'Our Central Committee has not yet decided to turn to Tass about the Central Committee's task with regard to the publication of the glorification of the old system of education, but it is possible that after the discussion it will be decided to publish a special document of glorifying the old system in the Central Committee. This document will be submitted to the departmental committees which are responsible for the organization of the 1936 Congress, in which there will be further question.'
9. See Part 1 of this volume on this point.
10. Pravda, December 28, 1932.

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- 11 According to Larimer's estimates, the migratory flow involved 1.4 million people in 1929, 2.6 in 1930, and 4.1 in 1931 (*Population* p. 150).
- 12 See *Zi* March 4, 1930.
- 13 For more on these points, see *Izvestiya* March 17, 1930; *Trud* March 24, 1930 and *Pravda*, April 6, 1930.
- 14 See *Voprosy truda*, Aug.-Sept. 1932, p. 51, quoted by S. M. Schwarz, *Labor in the Soviet Union* (London, 1953), p. 58.
- 15 I. Stalin, *Works*, Vol. 13, p. 37.
- 16 See above p. 55.
- 17 See Part 1 of this volume.
- 18 Decree of June 30 (*Izvestiya*, July 1 1931)
- 19 *Trud*, March 3 1934.
- 20 *Sovetskaya yustitsiya*, No. 17, 1933, p. 21, quoted by S. Schwarz, p. 66.
- 21 Among these measures was the prohibition of activities of an industrial nature in the countryside. This prohibition was at first applied in the local plan but was later made general by a decree of October 1930 (*Izvestiya* Oct. 23 1930). Just a few small activities escaped this prohibition. The latter helped to lower the standard of life in the countryside since rural industry was relatively prosperous during NEP. Such a measure denied an equal distribution of industry across the country. It exacerbated town/country inequalities and the dependence of the country. It tended to enhance the pay-off of state investments.
- 22 See *Trudovye zakonodatel'stvo SSSR* (Moscow, 1941), article 5 (Article 5) by R. Conquest, *Industrial Workers in the USSR* (London, 1967) p. 10; also C. Burnstock et al., *Management* p. 39.
- 23 These different arrangements were maintained after the war. Khrushchev referred to them in 1956 (See *KP*, June 7, 1956). The post-war labour plans also specified that this kind of recruitment would be applied to the mobilized students and workers "liberated" from certain branches of the economy (See V. S. Andreyev and P. A. Gunov, *Ogranicheniya na rabochikh SSSR* (Moscow 1958) pp. 14 and 73).
- 24 *Pravda*, April 5, 1932.
- 25 This is an estimate, see S. N. Prokopovich, *Muzhestvo v tekhnicheskikh i URSs*, p. 62.
- 26 *Izvestiya*, Feb. 2, 1933.

Extension of the wage-earning class and the rigidifying of factory despotism

THE combination of a vast rural exodus with highly centralized accumulation led to the rapid development of wage relationships.

For example, between 1926 and 1940 the number of wage-earners employed in the Soviet economy grew almost threefold, from 11.4 to 33.9 million.¹ In 1940 these wage-earners were more than 40 percent of the economically active population.² This extension of wage-earning was above all connected with urbanization,³ and was an integral part of the process of accumulation. Like the latter, the extension of wage-earning was not really under control. For example, at the end of the First Five-Year Plan the number of wage-earners enumerated by the Central Statistical Bureau was 22.9 million, although the Plan had envisaged only 15.9 million.⁴

As is generally known, the growth of the wage-earning population was due to the reduction in the number of peasants and kolkhozniks, but it was also due to the transformation into wage-earners of numerous artisans and NEPmen.

The enormous growth of the wage-earning population is presented by official Soviet ideologists as testimony to the henceforth socialist nature of USSR and to the strengthening of the working class. Neither of these interpretations can be accepted. In the first place, the development of a wage-earning class cannot be regarded as identical with the development of "socialism." The wage relationship is the basic capitalist relationship.

Therefore the increased number of wage-earners only demonstrates the victory of the capitalist revolution which progressed faster at the end of the 1920s. As for the working class, it was impossible to talk of its 'strengthening'. True, among the non-wage earners there were numerous workers but the number of workers among the wage-earners decreased between 1929 and 1940. The proportion fell from 74.6 to 67.3 percent.¹ What really happened was that there was a very rapid increase in the number of state employees and cadres. In other words a pronounced bureaucratization of economy and society.

All the same, when it is a question of the strengthening or the weakening of workers, industrial labor, or more generally of direct producers during the 1930s the numerical figures have only a secondary importance. What is important is the change in living and working conditions that affected the mass of the wage-earners, especially the workers. Significantly from the beginning of the 1930s or even from the end of the 1920s² there was a virtual anti-worker offensive which corresponded with a deepening of capitalist relationships.

I The immediate subordination of the workers to the utilization requirements of the means of production

The anti-worker offensive at first took the form of a gradual increase of the powers that administrators in the economic and state structure could bring to bear on the workers. At the time of the NEP the immediate justification for this increased power were the problems created by relatively weak labor discipline (manifested by 'under-utilization' of the work-day) and the tendency of workers to frequently quit their enterprise where they worked in the hope of finding better working conditions elsewhere.³

Problems raised by a pronounced labor turnover became especially difficult after 1929, following the influx to the factories of workers lacking any experience of industrial work who had been uprooted and subjected to many material difficulties (housing, food-supply, etc.) and hence were lacking stability. However instead of dealing with these difficulties, the authorities

enhanced the disciplinary powers of managers while the wages directed by the latter found themselves a little, very difficult angels. They had to achieve a rapid increase of production and productivity with a pronounced reduction of costs. It was in order to meet these objectives that managers of enterprises were invested with extraordinary authority, especially, matters of hiring and firing.

During NEP the recruitment and dismissals of workers was not the business solely of the enterprises' management and personnel services. At that period the trade unions enjoyed relative independence in their relations with the economy apparatus and they did not have to put productivity and efficiency in pride of place. At that time they often intervened in questions of recruitment and dismissal making a genuine decision that would concordantly harm the workers' interests.

Things changed drastically at the beginning of the 1930s. In the same of industrialization and collectivization adding all industries to the sea and complete elimination of recruitment and dismissals by the leaders of industry were overcome by a series of measures whose aims and methods were basically defined in the decisions of the RSFSR Sovnarkom of September 6, 1930 of the Central Executive Committee and USSR Sovnarkom December 15, 1930 and of the USSR Labor Commissariat of December 28, 1930.*

The ultimately envisaged aims included the most efficient possible utilization of the means of production, planned organization of the labor force, optimal distribution of the available workers between industrial enterprises, branches of industry and regions,* and control over the rational organization of the work for our enterprises of the socialist sector.

Finally it was not so much question of ensuring a certain stability in the workforce as to direct the latter mainly agree with the "needs" of the state enterprises and of productive growth and accumulation.

The decisions adopted in this way expressed a political will, but their application in practice encountered many difficulties. The existence of labor legislation passed in the early 1920s that acknowledged a series of workers' rights (only partly but could) to be strengthened or systematically infringed. The

resistance of workers who in the years passed, found ways of evading the regulations, the non-cooperation of enterprise managers, each trying to recruit a large number of workers in order to reach the production plans for which he was responsible, the ignorance of the real "needs" for manpower of the various industries, and so on.

In fact, the 1930 measures failed. The same fate befell the attempts made by enterprise managers to try to reduce labor turnover by getting workers to sign an undertaking not to leave the factory before a certain period had elapsed. Acknowledging these failures, the authorities (with the cooperation of the trade unions), adopted ever stricter measures to limit and finally prevent workers leaving their employment.

(a) *The progressive disappearance of the workers' freedom to make and break work contracts*

At the beginning of 1931, the Central Committee of Trade Unions changed the rules for social security so as to make sick benefits and other benefits vary in amount according to a worker's period of service at his enterprise. In later years this ruling became more and more severe.¹⁰

These measures having proved insufficient in relation to the aims envisaged by the Soviet government, the latter decided on September 27, 1932 to reintroduce the internal passport. Henceforward each wage-earner had to hand in his passport to the enterprise which employed him. The passport was to carry a mention of previous jobs held by the holder. In this way a check was made on the conditions under which a worker had left his previous job. With this decree, the authorities also envisaged that they could reduce the growth of the urban population in a period of food supply and housing crisis, and attract the kolkhozniks in their villages since, as everyone realized only in exceptional cases would kolkhozniks get passports; in general the kolkhozniks and peasants could only obtain a temporary certificate to allow them to carry out seasonal work. This certificate was valid for a maximum of three months and could be extended only by request of the employer.¹¹

Figures show that from 1933 labor turnover slackened in industry. In 1935 the average period of employment in an enterprise reached almost fourteen months, although this was still short.

A new measure was the *spisok* also in December 1933. This was the general introduction of all wage earners of the work book.¹¹ This booklet was originated by the enterprise that took on a worker for his first job. During the currency of the work contract the enterprise retained this booklet and noted in it all the points laid down by the law and in particular the punishments imposed on the worker. The booklet was returned to the worker at ^{the} if the enterprise employing him agreed to do so with him. To get himself employed elsewhere the worker had to hand his booklet to the new employer who otherwise could not take him on. In this way each worker was bound to an enterprise and his successive employers knew all about his working career. At least that was the intention, although it seems that in fact that quite a number of workers changed their jobs without observing the regulations.

Therefore so as to tie the worker even more firmly to the enterprise other measures were taken that reinforced the strangeness in trade in the decree of December 20, 1938. This involved mainly the decree of December 20 of the same year which was adopted according to the official explanation in order to strengthen labor discipline (against the administration of social insurance and struggle against abuses in all kinds of).

This decree imposed on a worker wishing to leave his job a one-month notice in place of six days. Even if this regulation was observed a worker who left his job without the agreement of his management lost all rights to social insurance benefits for the first six months of his new job. Agreement of the ordinary management was not enough to preserve the rights of the workers such rights were reduced in effect for a worker to receive full benefits it was necessary to belong to the same enterprise and be uninsured for at least six years. The shorter the employment in an enterprise the fewer were his basic benefit rights.¹²

As it was concluded that the effects of these different decisions were not enough a decree of June 28, 1940 remodeled the legislation and strengthened disciplinary measures.

A reintroduced the eight-hour day and the seven-day week and explicitly forbade workers and employers to break the enterprise of their own volition.¹³ In this way the regulation demanded for any worker to break the work contract to leave the industrial enterprise provided due notice was given.

Article 4 of the decree of June 29, 1940 provided that a worker could not quit an enterprise except in exceptional circumstances (illness, invalidity, retirement). Article 5 required penal servitude (two to four months in prison, or less) for workers leaving their job without permission. Job quitting could be penalized in particular by corrective labor carried out in the factory without deprivation of freedom (Article 12 of the Penal Code). This labor was paid at a lower rate than normal work and was subject to stricter discipline. In addition, of this discipline enabling the imposition of a punishment regime.¹⁴ In reality this corrective labor was a forced labor carried out at the usual place of work.

In September 1940 it was decided that the term 'correctional labor' would be regarded as an employment contract that invalidated the worker's right to strike. This right would be restored only after six months of normal work in the meantime all right to strike was suppressed. The junction of the Soviet Press Agency published several articles encouraging the Sovietist interpretation of these decisions.¹⁵

The reluctance of judges to enforce these statutes was expressed so great that the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet issued an order on the availability of responsible criminal action to be taken against those who applied the law less than the required severity. Another order dated August 1940 provided the in matters of penal labor legislation no committee would be passed by a single judge nor by the full court of the judge and two assessors.¹⁶ These facts were not entirely contrary to Article 112 of the 1936 Constitution which provided for the independence of judges and the hierarchical structure of all tribunals concerned with penitentiaries. However, these were far from the first violations of the Constitution but it is noteworthy that they were published in most cases.

These various measures as well as others which limited the autonomy of workers of labor discipline were taken in part

... at a time when the government and the press claimed that thanks to the Russo-German Pact the danger of war had receded.²¹ Moreover they remained in force for several years after the war, although they were then to some extent falling into decay.²²

As for the true wartime measures (that is, those concerning labor mobilization), these did not appear until 1941 and 1942,²³ and in principle did not remain in force after the war.

On the whole during the 1930s and early 1940s there was a continuing reduction of the freedom enjoyed by workers to conclude or break work contracts. At the same time, labor legislation tended towards transformation into penal legislation. Thus efforts developed to "plan" employment directly. Among these efforts, a special place belonged to the measures permitting compulsory transfers of labor and the 'organized recruitment' of workers. The fact is that while the authorities refused workers the right to change their jobs, they provided enterprises with the possibility of transferring workers from one job to another.

(b) Dismissal and obligatory transfers from one enterprise to another

The already mentioned decision of the Central Executive Committee of Sovnarkom, dated December 15, 1930, gave ample powers to the labor commissariats of the USSR and the different republics to 'systematically redistribute the labor force within the framework of production plans fixed by the competent authorities. The text of the decision was really intended to apply essentially to skilled workers and technicians.²⁴ In 1930 in fact unskilled labor was still abundantly available.

The text of December 15, 1930, and those which followed soon after²⁵ aimed above all at reducing the 'excesses' of labor that some enterprises drove to preserve in order to cope better with their production targets—that is, they aimed to remove the 'spare fat' of these enterprises or, as was said at the time, to "scrape off" the excess of workers.²⁶

In 1932 the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Court established a distinction between workers, on the one hand, and

specialists and technicians on the other. The former could refuse a transfer, in which case they were dismissed, the latter had to accept a transfer or face eventual penal prosecution. After the abolition, by a decree of June 23, 1933, of the Commissariat of Labor,²⁷ the right of carrying out the measures described in the provisions already mentioned fell to enterprise managements and to the main managements of the industrial commissariats or commissariats to which they had been subordinated. It was the measures for "removing the fat" which above all, continued to be taken at this period.

On the other hand, certain provisions of the decrees of June 26, 1940 and October 20, 1940²⁸ put greater emphasis on the compulsory movement of workers from one place of work to another. These provisions allowed "the forced transfer of engineers, technicians, foremen, employees and skilled workers of an enterprise, administration or institution to another." They were later extended to numerous categories of workers.²⁹ The latter could not refuse a transfer except in special cases save in such cases, refusal brought penal sanctions.³⁰ The same kind of thing happened with the creation of "manpower reserves".

(c) *The creation of "manpower reserves"*

From the First Five-Year Plan, efforts were made with a view to installing a system of *obligatory allocation* of young workers to jobs decided by the state administrations. Thus a decision of the Supreme Economic Council (VSNKh) of November 27, 1929 compelled young people graduating from enterprise vocational schools (essentially workers' sons) to spend three years in a job to which they were posted by the economic department that had financed their vocational training schools. On September 15, 1933 this decision was confirmed by the Central Executive Committee and Sovnarkom.³¹ Numerous indications had suggested that compulsory postings were encountering difficulties, hence the need for the 1933 confirmation.

This regulation was confirmed by a decree of October 2, 1940 which created a new organ, the "General Directorate of Labor Reserves."³² Supervising all the vocational schools, this

General Direct was to recruit each year 800,000 to 1,000,000 young people to 14-19 years who would spend two years in these schools. Those who were 16-17 spent only six months and therefore did not receive a true trade education but were instead trained for a specialized job. At their graduation the former students were directed by the Directorate of Labor Reserves to an industrial or transport enterprise, where they had to stay for four years.

The decree of October 2 specified that if there was an inadequate number of volunteers for these schools, the annual contingent would be topped up by compulsory direction. In the countryside it was kolkhoz chairmen who carried out the selection process (limited to two percent of each age group). In the towns the town soviets did this.

At first these arrangements applied only to young men. When the USSR entered the war they were extended to young women. The establishment of a system of labor reserves was undoubtedly accelerated by the war but it was nevertheless maintained after the war with the creation of a Labor Reserves Ministry.

This system had an obvious class significance: it was not universal. For example secondary students (eighth year and upwards) and higher education students were exempt. On the other hand, another decree of the same date of October 2, 1940 abolished (contrary to the 1936 Constitution) the secondary education (8th-10th year) and higher education grants. In consequence young people exempt from recruitment by the labor reserves services were essentially the children of parents whose salaries were high enough to pay for secondary and higher education.²²

These measures were part of a virtual anti-worker offensive. But they represent only one aspect of a process which increasingly prevented the immediate producers from exerting direct influence on their conditions of work. Another aspect was the transformation to be examined shortly of the methods by which wages and work norms were determined. Such an offensive moreover could not be set in motion without the subjection of the workers to a systematic and severe repression. The latter as a well known expressed itself in the development of police organs inside enterprises and in the extension

of forced labor. All the changes which affected in these ways the situation of the workers expressed the intensifying grip on the latter put by the demands of capital and of accumulation. Marx had already observed that one of the characteristics of capital is that the worker in fact belongs to the capitalist class before he sells himself to an individual capitalist.²⁴ During the 1930s the authorities reduced to a minimum the visible freedom of the worker to take opportunities to sell his working capacity and thus helped to atomize the working class.

B. The authoritarian determination of working conditions and the development of factory deepatism

In their effort directed toward the greatest possible exploitation of the worker, so as to gain the maximum accumulation the authorities increasingly were led to subject wages and working conditions to unilateral decisions by the economic organs and they tended to subordinate trade union activity to their pre-occupations with production and profitability. In these conditions the tendency predominated of "fixing" by administrative decision the volume of the wage, its distribution, and the levels of different categories of wage. As the volume presenting the First Five-Year Plan put it: "The wages question occupies a central place in the Five-Year Plan. It is born that the fundamental categories of the Plan meet the working-class living standard, the development of labor productivity, production costs, the rhythm of accumulation, elements of the demand and supply equation. For the Soviet state the wages question constitutes deep down, the foundation of the plan."²⁵

Throughout the 1930s measures multiplied for "adjusting wages to the plan targets (especially those of the annual plan which were themselves incorporated in enterprise plans) and for fixing work norms that each producer had to fulfill in order to receive a predetermined wage. It will be seen that the carrying out of these measures did not permit effective coordination between the plan targets and the evolution of wages and labor productivity. Nominal wages, real wages and worker productivity all developed according to rhythms and even orders that were

very wide & removed from the "surface" of the plans. The scope and the permanence of these diverging tendencies show that it was not simply a question of "mistakes" in planning but of the absence—despite the plans—of a genuinely planned economy.

In fact the real evolution of the economy was affected by class struggles and by contradictions in accumulation, which had their repercussions on the movements of prices and wages.

Although the measures taken to try to assure the enforcement of plans relating to wages and work norms appeared to be ineffective, they nevertheless produced important qualitative effects on production relationships and working conditions. They had the result in particular of replacing collective labor agreements and negotiations with regulatory measures, and they imposed new features on wage relationships.

(a) *The decay of collective agreements and the development of unilateral regulation of working conditions*

According to the Labor Code of November 9, 1922, the wages paid in different industries resulted from collective agreements made between the trade unions and the managements of industry. The same thing happened with working conditions not regulated by law. Individual contracts had to conform with the clauses of the collective agreements. Violation of the latter by industrial managements was cause for penal action, as was infringement of laws protecting the labor force.²⁸ At the same time there existed general agreements (for branches of the economy) and local agreements. The Labor Code provided that agreements would only come into force after being registered by the *Narodnaya Okhrana*, & this arrangement was to ensure that the labor protection laws were not violated by collective agreements. However, after government decisions were taken to limit wage increases (from 1936) the registration of agreements was used among other methods to keep wage increases within the limits fixed by the government, limits which in principle had to be respected in the course of negotiations.²⁹

In fact, up to 1929 the trade union organizations were able to use the collective agreements to obtain working conditions that sometimes were more advantageous for workers than had been agreed at by the government's decisions and by the plans. At the beginning of the first Five Year Plan this attitude of the unions was officially denounced. For example, *Pravda* of October 1929 published a letter from workers which stated:

When collective agreements come up for renewal be [kward groups of workers, stirred up by counter revolutionary Trotzkies, rightist opportunists, Kulakophiles will start pressing their non proletarian and greedy demands. We appeal to all workers of the Soviet Union to put up the most active resistance to the attacks of goldbeaters.⁴⁰

Between 1931 and 1933 several government decrees forbade the substance of collective agreements to matters which concerned with the plan targets and the state regulation of wages. Collective agreements also became rare and were in fact and in fact were no longer signed. However, after Stalin had reprimanded the unions (in May 1935 for lacking interest in the workers' material and cultural needs⁴¹) union organizations tried in 1937, to conclude new collective agreements but in effect had no results, or at least no results of practical significance.

During the 1930s the Soviet leaders reaffirmed that basic wage was solely a matter for industrial managers naturally within the framework of the tasks which were imposed on them. For example, in 1934 at a conference of industrial cadres, the Commissar for Industry Ordzhonikidze declared:

As managers responsible administrators and foremen, you must personally occupy yourselves with wages in all their current details and not let other people handle this important question. Wages are the most powerful weapon you have.⁴²

And in 1935 Andreyev a politician member reaffirmed that

Wage rates must be left entirely in the hands of industry managers. They must fix the norms.⁴³

The policy followed from the First Five-Year Plan resulted finally in a total concentration of wage-fixing power in the hands of enterprise managers charged with executing the measures concerning wages and norms ordered by the Party and government in cooperation with the planning organs. In these conditions, the fact that the wages actually paid diverged constantly from those "forecast" by the plans testifies to the scale of the economic and social contradictions, and of the failure to cope with the latter. The same might be said of the disappearance of collective agreements since the procedures allowing workers to protest in a set form against the abuses of authority by enterprise managers and cadres ended with the development of arbitrariness and the decline of industrial working conditions. In this connection, the anesthetizing of the Commission for Settling Labor Disputes (RKK) in the 1930s is especially significant.

(b) *The withering away of the RKK and the growth of the power of enterprise managers and industrial cadres over the workers*

The RKK *enterprisno-konfliktivye komissii** first saw the light of day in 1918. At that time they were purely trade union organs that decided wage policy. In 1922 their existence was recognized by the Labor Code but they assumed a balanced structure with an equal number of seats for representatives of the enterprise management and representatives of the union committee. They fulfilled two functions. On the one hand they fixed production norms, made decisions on the classification of posts, qualification scales and other questions relating to working conditions. On the other hand, they had competence in settling any conflict resulting from a collective agreement and in examining any complaint by a worker about his work contract and the application of labor legislation. If not settled in this way the complaint of a worker or group of workers could be passed to arbitration or to the jurisdiction of local organs of the Labor Commissariat (*O Truda*).^{**}

These different functions of the RKK disappeared in the course of the 1930s. Fixing norms and the classifications of posts,

qualifications and wages were removed from their control, at the same time as collective agreements were limited to the level of each enterprise, wages and working hours were in a special department of the management, the wage bureau. In 1933 the Central Council of Trade Unions confirmed this situation.¹⁰ One of the trade union leaders at the time Venzberg explained that this decision on wages was based on the necessity of ensuring within the enterprise the principle of one-man management and economic planning. He added that to question this decision would imply a political and Marxist deviation 'which would be intolerable'.

The role of the RKK as organs of arbitration and conciliation also came to an end with the transformation of trade unions organizations into mechanisms closely tied to enterprise agreements and subordinated to a production political line. In the last year for which statistics were published prior to 1945, union versus management disputes submitted to the RKK in 1929-30. In that year, the number of workers involved in disputes initiated by union committees in enterprises was about 1.1 million, a decrease of about 4% percent compared to 1928. Subsequently the statistics made no mention of such disputes. Up to 1933 the disputes could still be examined by the RKK, but the Labour Commissioner disappeared in 1933. As part of this time the tasks of O Trade were handed to the regional trade union councils. These organs disappeared in 1937. While the unions were reorganized their judicial functions also disappeared, they had previously in any case been completely ineffective.

Finally the functions of the RKK and O Trade in the matter of the claims of individual workers or groups of workers decayed, even though no change in the planned regulation guaranteed this. In fact, the increase in the powers of the enterprise management family and the activity of the RKK did not prevent the massive flow of new workers of peasant origin resulted in the absence of information provided by the unions in this regard. This was on the part of the majority of workers and employees that there existed organs other than those of the enterprise administrative service to whom they might address their complaints. In the old enterprises, the RKK functioned for a little longer in the early 1930s, but as the workforce increased their functions decreased. In general they do not seem to have been more established

at construction sites or in new enterprises. An enquiry conducted in 1912 covering fifty enterprises showed that by that time the RKK were almost ignored by the workers and were not even informed about complaints. Those RKK which did exist soon turned hostile and a large proportion of their demands was annulled by the O Truda⁵².

From 1925 workers who had complaints to lodge brought about underpayment for overtime, non-payment of bonuses, violations of labor regulations, addressed themselves only to the management. Very except occasionally appeals were made to the courts. But usually no claim was formulated even in cases of wrongful dismissals, and of wages lower than they should have been because the circumstances were not right those who disputed a decision could easily be accused of antisoviet activity. As well the tribunals almost systematically decided in favour of enterprise managements so much so that the Justice Commercial was obliged to call them to order when certain abuses became too blatant. Even the frequency of these visits to order demonstrates their lawlessness.⁵³

In general official ideology and practice made it very difficult for workers openly to draw up a complaint. It was admitted that certain ones had to be taken by enterprise managements and the questioning of these decisions apart from obvious violations of generally accepted regulations was most often regarded as an attempt to attack the principle of workers' self-government and as indicative of a lack of discipline on the part of those making the complaint.

Workers were not forbidden explicitly. But workers were severely punished when they tried to undertake collective action in protest against conscious breaking wages norms and at other aspects of working conditions. The police soon intervened and the courts applied Paragraph XIV of Article 50 of the USSR (similar to one of the corresponding articles of the codes of the other republics), which provided that

The deliberate non-fulfilment by a worker of his obligations or their wilfully negligent execution—extreme deprivation of liberty for a period of not less than one year with total or partial seizure of property in the case of especially serious

in certain as the punishment has, be the supreme measure of social defense - death by shooting or the demolition of all property."

The growing and latent support given by the enterprise managers to the struggle for higher prices and lower costs, the decay of the RKK and other organizations' position to examine workers' complaints, the situation in which workers were left short their rights, the opposition to those against workers in the name of the necessity of selling the planes at any price, all entailed consequences in the development of a factory despotism that was dark brutal. A statement by M. M. Kaganovich in 1941 states the conception held by party leaders at that time of the powers and functions of the enterprise manager:

In the factory, the manager is king. Everyone must be subordinated to him. If the manager does not accept this, if he wants to play the liberal and act like the brother, if he wants to spend time in discussion then he is not a manager and he must not be in charge of a factory. Everything must be subordinated to the manager. The earth must tremble when the manager goes around the factory."

These words crudely summarize the way in which the managers were required to exercise their functions, so far removed from any consideration of the relevant trade conductor. It was a case of an absolute authority which did no opposition within the factory while being unaccountable to the targets fixed for each enterprise by Party and government targets enshrined in the plans. This was where ideology for the role of boss and master which took form at this time and was cultivated in the engineers' and cadre schools.

This despotism of the factory (the term used by Marx to denote the discipline of a capitalist factory) led to the deterioration of arbitrariness in the matter of workers' wages. Not only these, but production norms also, were fixed unilaterally so the workers lost all control over the way in which their wages

were calculated and the deductions made from them. These became especially numerous from 1932 when the principle of "material responsibility" of workers was applied in the case of defective production. Defects could entail a significant reduction and even total loss of wages. Such wage reductions occurred even "when defects have not been caused by the fault of the worker," for example, when the raw material was defective.

Other deductions were provided for in cases of work stoppage, even "when the cause has nothing to do with the worker"; the latter's wage was reduced (in principle by one half the basic wage in the appropriate category). It was vital that he informed the management unhesitatingly about the cause of the stoppage, for if he failed to do so he would receive no wage at all and disciplinary punishment might be visited on him.¹¹

The consequences of the hardening of factory despotism made themselves felt also as violations of labor legislation.

(c) Violations of labor legislation

Labor legislation adopted during the early years of the Soviet revolution, codified in 1922, was at the time highly favorable to workers and undoubtedly one of the world's most favorable. During NEP it was in the main applied in practice, both the trade unions and the Labor Inspectorate kept an eye on things. The situation began to change as the industrialization plan took form. Violations of the legislation were at first felt in the question of working hours and rest-days, a field regulated by Articles 60 (rest-days), 104-106 (working hours and overtime) and 131 (working hours for pregnant or nursing women).¹²

From the beginning of the 1930s enterprise managers began to disregard the rules for overtime. Often managers imposed on workers working hours that exceeded sometimes considerably the limits fixed by law and without observing the prescribed procedures (agreement of a party organization and of the Labor Inspectorate). Similarly, the rules for rest-days were frequently violated. When things went too far some protests did appear in the press, notably in the Komsomol newspaper but this same also praised factories and mines in which breakdays

had been all but abolished and in which overtime extended the working day to 12 or even 16 hours¹⁰

Most often, violations of rules about working hours and rest days were presented as decisions of the workers in the race for "socialist competition".

There can be no doubt that at the beginning of the First Five Year Plan there was a certain enthusiasm for production, especially on the part of youth but it would not have been enough to cause such long and frequent increases of working hours. Moreover, the protests that the press from time to time published imply that long extensions of working hours were imposed by enterprise managements with the support of Party organizations even though, usually the external forms of union democracy were respected, for example, when a workers' meeting was required to vote for "or against" the enterprise's right to and to accept working hours that would allow the plan to be fulfilled.

"Socialist competition" imposed by enterprise managements became a means of violating labor legislation without anybody daring to oppose the move.

The following example, presented as "positive" by the Tass union newspaper shows how far the extension of working hours could be taken:

Competition between the different gangs has taken an extraordinary form. As soon as the first gang has finished work and the second has started, the first strives to help the second. Shattered by fatigue young men who have finished their first shift lie down even at the place of work on the banks and get up after two or three hours of sleep to continue working¹¹.

Repetitions of such practices damaged the workers health and were an important cause of work accidents.

At the start of the Second Five Year Plan, incitement to the workers' health was on such a scale that workers' discontent made itself felt and compelled the union organizations in spite of their orientation toward production to make protest. For example Trud condemned the most blatant abuses and cited the case of the Moscow region foundries where a group

12 foundrymen worked an average of 15 hours daily for three months the workers became so tired that they left work while metal was still being poured. It also published an investigation by the metalworkers' union revealing that in the other enterprises of a Ukraine trust "workers labor often for 14-16 hours or more and sometimes as much as 20 and even 23 hours. And it reported that in certain mines of the Donets Basin a basic nightshift of 9-10 hours had been imposed".

Against those who refused to work the extra hours the enterprise management applied punishments established for unjustified absence or used the techniques of allocating the most arduous work to them. The articles from time to time published by the press to "denounce" these practices did nothing fundamental to change the situation. In the factories, the union organizations continued to collaborate with enterprise managements in the name of fulfilling the plans and of socialist competition".

The constant violation of rules concerning working hours also had negative consequences on the quality of production even more so as it was added to the increase of production norms. It led to a substantial deterioration of work relationships which would cause Stalin in 1935 to condemn the indifference of the unions to this situation. The latter then responded but only superficially, by means of simple protests which did nothing to hinder the course of these practices. The same sequence occurred in 1927 when the head of the Trade Unions Central Council, Stverzik, stated that

The abuse of overtime and of rest days is the area where most violations are committed against labor legislation.⁶⁵

This declaration changed nothing. Violations of the legislation continued notably in the matter of working conditions for youths under 18 and pregnant women.⁶⁶

Fall statistics about work accidents stopped appearing at the beginning of the 1930s, but occasionally newspaper articles made evident the scale of the problem.

Moreover, the regulations for safety and accident prevention at work were likewise not respected by enterprise managements.

for their part the party and trade union representatives complained about the situation. The union press reported the extreme cases, but such formal protests had no effect on company practices.

Again the case described by the union press may be mentioned: the presence of noxious gases in numerous works, conditions reaching from 'the gutted shell' situations to lack of sufficient air supply in factories and mines, etc., visibility unprotected machines, lack of insulation for the tension cables, and so on.²³

After 1916 the negative consequences from the point of view of the authority on the one side or disregard for safety regulations were such that many enterprise managers and officials were condemned for having allowed the situation to develop in these ways. They were then accused of being responsible for the people and situations (even though the existing safety regulations imposed on the factors could never be fully fulfilled by violating safety regulations). The 'Mannheim trials' indicated up to a point the scale of damage and even of catastrophes (mainly on the railroads and mines) that had been enabled by the policy of output growth at any price. The accused in these trials confessed that it was instructions given by themselves that such an attitude was perpetrated ('they declared that they had orders of agents of imperialist powers like Germany, Japan, etc.'). The final day of these confessions has often been shown.²⁴ It is clear that this aspect of the trials was aimed at the deep dissatisfaction of the workers, the deterioration of working and living conditions being blamed on the officials responsible.

It would appear that the sentences pronounced at the climaxes of the various trials were not enough to put an end to the implications of work accidents and catastrophes. The accidents and catastrophes were due to the way in which the struggle for production was organized. Nevertheless the authorities continued to strive for the full limit at any price of the industrial and financial power despite the negative effects that this in the end had on the situation of production and finance because of the enormous wastage of human and material resources entailed by this way of doing things.

Facts as which developed in these ways cannot be explained simply by the blind pursuit of output. They have also a

class character. They were the affirmations carried to extremes of the authority of the power-holders managers and cadres who wished to break the resistance (in using even passive resistance) of the workers, and impose on them factory discipline of a rigid prudential type. These practices demonstrate a terrible scorn for the workers which took the form of denouncing the ' Petty bourgeois' outlook of workers who did not accept the orders of enterprise managers and who were often treated as 'class enemies' as such they could be sentenced to deportation, and to prison or punishment any other.

The contradictions fostered by these practices were however so deep that the Party - while not attacking them at their roots - was occasionally obliged to have enterprise managers punished. The end of the 1930s was marked by penal sentences against directors and engineers accused of deliberately slowing down accidents of excessive severity having occurred. But repression bore also on workers who denounced management (that is before rather than after an accident) violations of work safety regulations.⁶³

Violation of labor legislation and the maltreatment of workers at factories, mines and construction sites stemmed from a violent anti-worker offensive and from an unrestrained struggle for increased growth and immediate profitability of enterprises. The judgment that Marx made about the functioning of capitalism can be unreservedly applied here notably where he writes that it is more than any other system of production a master of men of living work a squanderer of health and blood and also of nerves and brains.⁶⁴

These characteristics of capitalism developed during the 1930s in factories employing free workers. It will be seen that in conditions of forced labor they assumed gigantic proportions.

(d) The toughening of labor discipline

The severity of labor regulations intensified throughout the 1930s. The evolution of punishments inflicted on workers for "unjustified absence" and the definition of such as "absenteeism" demonstrate the toughening of labor discipline.

*By virtue of Article 47 of the Labor Code, as it was revised on August 1927 the fact of having been absent for a total of 15 days in one month, without such absence being properly excused or justified for medical reasons, was punished by discharge without notice or compensation. On November 15 1932, Law 47 was revised by a decision of the Central Executive Council of Saarbrücken-Homburg, a single day of absence was cause for dismissal without notice or compensation. The prior management was not only authorized to apply this punishment, but was required to do so.

Punishments for unexcused absence became more severe by virtue of this decree as well as by a directive of November 1932 and another decree of December 4.¹¹ Among new punishments applicable to cases of unauthorized absence the expulsion of a "family person" from his lodgings, if the latter were provided by the enterprise, should be mentioned. The decree specified that this sanction was to be applied equally to the family and was to take no account of the unavailability of alternative accommodation due to the season (which means that this punishment was especially serious in winter) nor of the absence of means of transport. This measure was additionally accompanied by the withdrawal of ration cards. At that time this was a measure of extreme gravity "or without a reasonable recourse could only be made to the 'free market' where prices were exorbitant."

A subsequent decree (dated June 27 1933) specified that the expulsion from accommodation would take place even if the latter did not belong to the enterprise but had been put at the disposal of its personnel by a housing or house-building cooperative.¹²

Following the adoption of these measures the average annual number of working days lost by unauthorized absence per worker fell from 3.73 in 1932 to 0.93 in 1933 and 0.87 in 1934.¹³

In spite of this change—which was maintained in the following years—a campaign was begun during the fall of 1936 against the "shirker (proletariat), 'takers', and other greedy individuals. On December 26, 1936 this campaign culminated in the adoption of a new decree "for strengthening labor discipline, improving the application of social insurance and combatting shirks in these fields."¹⁴

This text was an important step toward the penalization of labor law. Henceforward, any late arrival at work, any early departure or midday or in the evening, any "loafing" had to be punished. The punishments were warning, reprimand, reprimand with threat of subsequent punishment, transfer to less well-paid work for up to three months and dismissal. Any wage-owner who was the object of three disciplinary measures in one month or of four in two consecutive months was considered guilty of unjustified absence and had to be punished for the latter offence.

On January 8, 1938 a new decision of the government the Party and the Central Council of Trade Unions made more hardened the regulation of labor.⁶ By virtue of this text any absence of more than 20 minutes was regarded as "unjustified absence" and punished as such. At the end of 1938 prison sentences were pronounced against managements or enterprise cadres who had failed to punish workers liable to punishment under Articles 109 and 111 of the Penal code.⁷ In the following weeks thousands of dismissals were pronounced for "unjustified absence".⁸

Fear of disciplinary sanctions then became a constant worry of many workers. Some of them gave up their midday meal so as not to risk a late arrival after the break. Visits to medical services and dispensaries became less frequent because the workers feared punishment after not being recognized as sick. Pressure was put at the same time on the doctors so that the number of sick notes issued at the beginning of 1939 fell by 50 per cent which the press regarded as a victory over "mudirgers".⁹

Thus the measures taken at the end of 1938 and beginning of 1939 had above all a repressive nature. It was a matter of putting workers in a situation of strict subordination. A supplementary step was taken toward the virtual penalization of "labor law" with the adoption of the law of June 20, 1940, whose Article 5 provided that an "unjustified absence would give rise to judicial prosecution and would be punished by 'correctional labor' carried out at the place of work for a maximum of six months and with a deduction from wages that could go as high as 25 percent". It has already been seen that from September 1940 "correctional labor" was regarded as an

interruption of employment and could result in the worker losing a great part of his previously won social security rights.

The Justice Commissariat and the procuracy required the courts to stretch to a maximum the definition of "unjustified absence" - "loafing" during working hours thereby qualified as unjustified absence. Also to be obligatory and deducted as guilty of unjustified absence were those who did not observe their management's decisions about work to be done in overtime or on holidays even if the overtime was ordered illegally, because it was not the workers' place to judge whether the conditions required for working overtime are present. Also punished for unjustified absence were workers absent from work with the permission of the management if it later transpired that the requested authorization, granted in good faith was objectively illegal. It did not correspond to a case where absence could be authorized.⁷⁰

Fearing that certain courts were hesitating to apply the law of June 26, 1940 in all its rigor the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet accepted, on August 15, 1940 a decision by required judges to consider only the fact of unjustified absence. It was thereby forbidden to take account of favorable testimony about an accused showing that he was an exemplary worker, a stakhanovite etc. because it was stated "those who withdraw themselves from work "cannot justly be called exemplary workers.". ⁷¹

As a result of such rulings even sick or fatigued workers were sentenced for unjustified absence so much so that December 1940 new directives were issued that sought to avoid the most shocking sentences. At the same time the judges were reminded that they should not dispense "leniency" and that the provisions of the Penal Code concerning reductions and suspensions of sentences did not apply in cases of "unjustified absence" (and it might be recalled that these cases often involved workers at risk of 20 minutes' "loafing").

The provisions of the law of June 26, 1940 which provided for prison sentences in case of refusal from management to force until April 1956⁷².

The ideological relationships that were predominant within the privileged strata at the beginning of the 1930s are demonstrated in a meaningful way by readers' letters to *Izvestiya*, demanding that domestic servants be made liable to the law of June 26, 1940. The editors of *Izvestiya* did not think that such an application was practicable but did not seem to be surprised at receiving such a demand.¹³

Thus it may be said that in the 1930s there took place a radical change in working conditions. Measures concerning hiring and firing, compulsory transfers of jobs, organized recruitment and instituting a very severe factory despotism, gave unprecedented powers to those who controlled access to means of production and the utilization of the resultant products. The anti-worker offensive also affected (as will be seen later) wage and norm fixing and the development of norms and wages. It tightly bound the workers to the requirements of accumulation and the utilization of the means of production.

While affirming that this situation was that of achieved socialism, the leading Party condemned all questioning of the existing order as 'counter revolutionary'. The defeat suffered by the workers was both social and political.

III. The transformation of the conditions of the workers' struggle and the veritable "nationalization" of the trade unions

For a proper understanding of the way in which the conditions of the workers' struggle changed in the 1930s, a brief recapitulation is necessary.

As is well-known, in the period of war communism there was a strong tendency towards 'nationalization' of the trade unions that is, their complete subordination to the state apparatus so that they could participate to the fullest extent in the struggle for output.¹⁴ At the end of 1920 Lenin condemned this tendency. He affirmed the dual nature of the Soviet state and indicated that this required that the unions were sufficiently independent to enable the workers to "protect themselves against their state".¹⁵ A little later he opposed Trotsky and

Bukharin who—in the sense of a "production take-off"—had reproached him for preoccupying himself with "formal demands" ¹⁹ Replying to these criticisms Lenin recalled that it was necessary to allow the unions to defend the workers so that the latter could fulfil their production tasks.²⁰ In March 1921, the Tenth Congress of the Party adopted by a substantial majority resolutions in line with this position. The letter was confirmed in January 1922 when the CC voted for a resolution formulated by Lenin that emphasized that there existed necessarily a certain conflict of interests in matters concerning labor control between the masses of workers and the directors and managers of the state enterprises or the government departments in charge of them, hence even in state enterprises it was "undoubtedly the duty of the trade unions to protect the interests of the working people".²¹

In reality this position and the consequences that flowed from it were fully accepted by some party administrators and enterprise managers. Realizing the social tension that had been engendered the Fourteenth Congress in December 1922 reaffirmed that the main task of the unions was the defense of the economic interests of the masses. Simultaneously there was condemnation of the tendency to form an "antagonism between the economic and union organs. It was evident that this tendency weakened trade union discipline".²²

Nevertheless this tendency remained a weak despite the positions of principle that had been adopted.

At the time the industrialization policy was launched these positions of principle were themselves abandoned without however not without practical consequences. The change of direction at that time explicitly obliged unions to give priority to output and compelled them to get rid of most of the old union leaders totally Tumsky replaced by Stverats.²³ This riddance was entirely carried out from above by decisions that the Party imposed on the unions.

The decisions taken then tilted the balance for the KPP almost to have a certain initiative to the unions and so Hercolich the letter had above all to obey the central organs of the Party. They had to conform with the orders that they received from the Party—in particular those involving production work, productivity increases and labor discipline.

(a) *The Sixteenth Congress (June-July 1930),
the role of the trade unions and
the struggle for industrialization*

The Sixteenth Congress confirmed the large-scale elimination, carried out from above, of the great majority of the old union leaders. In uncompromising language typical of the man, L. Kaganovich declared to the Congress that

The great majority of the leadership of the Central Council of the Trade Unions, and of the separate unions, have been replaced. Some might say that this is a violation of proletarian democracy but, comrades, it has long been known that for us Bolshevik democracy is not a fetish.¹⁰

The formulation by Kaganovich is explained by the fact that the 'purge' of the unions was not carried out by the unions themselves, but entrusted to the Party Central Commission and to the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection (RKI) at the request of the Central Council of Trade Unions as it was expressed in the "Union Resolution" passed by the Sixteenth Congress.¹¹

This resolution accused the old leadership of having followed an 'opportunist and trade unionist' orientation that was incompatible with the requirements of the "reconstruction period". It affirmed the need to continue the struggle against such an orientation, calling on Party organizations to ensure a "concrete direction" for trade union activity.¹²

This last formulation broke with the position expressed in the previous principle, which demanded that the Party should exercise a "general direction", avoiding what Lenin termed 'petty bureaucratism' and 'troublemaking interference in the unions'.¹³

In sum the "Union Resolution" aimed at making the unions into instruments for carrying out the plans. The central paragraph of the text is titled "Getting down to production". It detailed the unions' task in this field. It insisted on the organization of socialist competition and on the role of shock brigades workers (*udarniki*). Paragraphs devoted to improvement of

workers' material living conditions and of cultural and educational work occupied only a secondary place. It was clear that the activity in these fields was regarded as simply a means of social protection. All this was in accordance with the general orientation from industry and the economic administration.

At the beginning of 1931, the VASKh newspaper suggested that the unions should be split up so that they would be "harmonious" with the organization of the main industries, so that the unions would "readily have their eyes fixed on profit and multitudinous to establishing counter indices higher than those in force!" (In January 17 the newspaper the Central Council of Trade Unions (Tsentral) declared that a special committee of the Central Council had arrived at conclusion that it was necessary to split up the unions. At end of January 1931 after a report presented by Shchegolev the Central Council adopted a decision which increased the number of union federations from 24 to 44 without even having consulted them. After this reorganization the powers of the general assembly of the Central Council were reduced in favor of the President of this Council. The President, was itself put under the direct control of the Party Politburo. The whole trade union reorganization was carried out from above. It also led to a financial centralization. Henceforth all the union funds were in the hands of the Central Council, which was required to distribute them between the different union organizations.)

In fact, after the end of 1929 and again after the Ninth Congress, the unions concentrated their attention on production growth, on "socialist competition" and on the raising of taxes. They went as far as denouncing workers who tried to exceed these measures. The trade unions pressed commonly to dismiss such workers as "self-seekers" and sometimes published their names with a recommendation to enterprises not to hire them.

The desire to achieve at any price production plant that were extremely ambitious (and partly unattainable) and to increase the profits of state enterprises so as to provide finance for a very heavy investment program led the Party especially in spring '411—in demand that the unions conduct a campaign for an increase of work norms and for wage limitation. In this policy the unions were led to denounce workers as well as

factory managers opposed to increased work norms. And this increase usually led to a wage reduction, to the deterioration of working conditions and even to a decline of output quality.

Such practices, and the total indifference of the unions to the living conditions of the workers, ruined their prestige and authority among workers. If the latter remained unorganized, it was essentially because of the pressure put upon them and also so as to benefit from the material advantages obtained by possession of a union card. Finally these union practices damaged production itself so that in June 1931 Stalin had to give a reminder that the improvement of working and living conditions of workers was essential for the growth of output.²⁹

This reminder gave rise to numerous union self-criticisms. For example in a declaration made at the time of the August meeting of the Presidium of the Central Council of Trade Unions, *Trud* wrote,

The trade union leaders had come to regard it as bad taste and perhaps even opportunist to concern themselves with the vital needs of the workers. In the tractor plants the union organizations have become malignant growths of the management and have lost their trade union character.

The next day the same newspaper returned to the same question (*italic added*)

Many union organizations misunderstand the political importance of the struggle for the systematic improvement of the workers' living conditions insofar as it influences the success of socialist construction. This misunderstanding is at the bottom of the characteristic attitude that many worker organizations adopt, showing lack of interest in many horrifying facts that have so disastrous a repercussion on the execution of the industrial and financial plan.³⁰

These self-criticisms, although inspired by anxieties about output, had few effects. The immediate primacy of output led the unions to worry more about that than about working conditions.

They accepted their subordination to the central economic organs. They changed themselves into appendages of these and even condemned factory managers who granted "unjustified" wage increases. At the beginning of 1932, *Trud* organized local unions which behaved differently, writing of their "complicity" with enterprise managements who "have taken the road of unjustified wage increases."¹⁰¹

In February 1932 the Federation of Engineering Construction Workers attacked factory managers who allowed wage increases when the production plan had not been fulfilled. It went as far as requesting the Procuracy to bring criminal proceedings against these managers.¹⁰²

The "vigilance" of the unions with regard to "excessiveness of wages" was all the greater since they themselves were also held responsible for these excesses. They thereby became a state organ with the "policing of wages".¹⁰³

In 1932, as the end of the First Five-Year Plan approached the race for output growth accelerated and led more than ever to unions being regarded as organs charged above all with the fulfillment of the plan, including the financial plan. They were very frequently opposing wage increases, which would have reduced enterprises' profit margins. As will be seen, this contributed to a reduction of real wages whilst the Five-Year Plan had provided for an increase.

(b) The Ninth Trade Union Congress (April 1932) and the "takeover" of the unions by the state

The Ninth Congress of Trade Unions met in April 1932, in a fully "productivist" atmosphere.

Here Kaganovich once more condemned the former union leadership, eliminated three years previously, criticizing its "Menshevik-Trotskist" attitude that "put the workers' interests against those of socialist industry". Shvernik insisted on the tasks that the unions had to carry out resolutely, notably the greatest push; a extension of piecework with wage rates based on technical norms.

In total, the reports presented to the Congress emphasized that the unions were to devote themselves to the mobilization

of all working class strength for the expansion of socialist construction at an accelerated rhythm" and that they were not to sacrifice this activity for the sake of "protective tasks, according to the formulation used to condemn the activity of Trotsky and other former union leaders."¹⁰

The union line fixed by the Ninth Congress—a line which carried further previous practices—confirmed that Soviet workers were by this time deprived of any organization that could help them to struggle at the workplace for their interests and their working conditions. This was a great historical repression which helped to destroy the working class as a self-conscious class. This led to serious consequences for the workers and even for output itself, so much so that it inevitably produced a crisis that took the form of a trade union crisis. This crisis was such that sixteen years were to elapse before the Tenth Trade Union Congress met (in 1940).¹¹ This Congress moreover did not change anything fundamental in the role of the unions as auxiliaries of enterprise management and of the government.¹²

However at the beginning of the 1930s the pressure put on the unions by the Party and the government and the purge which struck trade unionists considered as "opportunist" did not succeed in preventing militant unionists, especially those of them who were close to the worker grassroots, from trying to resist the application of the "productivist" line. An echo of this resistance may be found in various statements by the leaders of the Central union apparatus. For example in 1933 Gavril Vinberg stated:

We must fight the bad trade unionists who distort the Party line with the same severity as the Party itself brings to bear against its opportunists. In the union ranks one sometimes hears remarks like this

Is it right for us not to oppose improvements of wages granted by industrial managers? If we do how will we look to the workers? This is to seriously misunderstand the duties of the unions. This is pure trade unionism. This kind of defense of the workers' interests must be fought mercilessly.¹³

"Sanctions against bad trade unionists" were not without effect. Enterprise managers instructed by the central departments

to increase work norms increased them substantially. The discontent of the working class then often made itself felt in circumstance that the central organ of the unions vigorously condemned writing for example

The revision of norms has collided with substantial resistance from elements of the hostile classes and sectors and others [It is workers whose living standards have substantially declined who are described in these terms —C.B.] Numerous reports have had to be made about attacks by class enemies having the aim of preventing the execution of the law's productivity plan. These attacks are various. Sometimes they are threats against employees of the norm fixing offices sometimes a skilful depression of productivity, sabotage of time记録, agitation against norm revision or a attempt to organise the resistance of certain groups of workers.¹⁰

There could hardly be a better admission of the existence of a movement outside the two organisations of a struggle workers against the degradation of their living and working conditions.

The counterstrike to this struggle was the formation of the unions. This state takeover took the form of opposite the dissolution of the Labor Commissariat and attribution of its functions to the unions which became a state administrator. For example the management of social security and the checking of the observation of safety measures at work, were transferred to the Central Council of Trade Unions. In 1934 the unions were placed then entrusted with the protection of the workers and peasants against all the fascists at level and they had to verify the application of Party and government directives concerning production and wages.¹¹

The unions became an enormous apparatus entrusted with enormous tasks. In fact they were transformed into an administrative body subject to the instructions of the Pribor and the Commissariat. This transformation however conformed them a little difficultly in relation to the workers, especially insofar as the managed social security and the application of labor legislation.

The size of the union apparatus was then such that a reorganization became necessary. A decision taken in September 1934 by the Party CC then ratified by the Central Council of Trade Unions led to a new burst of union federations. At the end of this reorganization there were 154 union federations (in place of 44 in 1931). Later this total would reach 170.¹¹⁰

Clearly this reorganization did not change the effects of the productionist line. The latter went so far that it worried even the industrial managers because lack of attention to working conditions and the resulting low output had negative repercussions on production. Thus at the time of a conference of managers of heavy industry there was a new reproach leveled at the unions for not paying enough attention to the workers' living conditions. In this way what would be called the "union crisis" signalled its approach.

(c) The "trade union crisis" and its aftermath

At the beginning of 1935 the dissatisfaction and disorientation of workers in regard to "their" trade unions became increasingly evident. The elections to the enterprise union committees took place in an atmosphere of deep indifference with a very low turn-out. This situation worried the Party leadership. It made it appear that there was a growing rift between the workers and the state apparatus. In addition this situation meant that the unions were not capable of coping with tasks that had to be correctly performed in order to prevent the existing contradictions in industrial enterprises deteriorating to the point where they could seriously hamper production.

On May 28 Stalin called a meeting of the Central Council leaders. He placed before them several questions about the confusion in which the elections to enterprise committees had been carried out, the ignorance of those electors which the bosses had shown, the lack of real democracy which characterized them and the bad work of the unions. He suggested breaking off the elections and preparing new ones to take place in different conditions after the unions had ordered a new program containing "new tasks". He declared that

"the average worker sometimes asks 'do we really need trade unions'." He reproached the letter of useless repetition with the economic organs and enterprise management, "when the essential task of the unions should be to concentrate all their attention on the cultural and daily needs of the masses."

According to the account of this conversation which was published (but only almost seven months later and which indicated the existence of serious resistance by numerous cadres to the guidelines then sketched) Sta is so declared:

Caring about the human personality bringing culture, the daily needs of the working class that is where trade union preoccupation should be centered

In the tasks thereby assigned to the unions it was no longer a matter of directing efforts above all to production but rather toward "the cultural and daily needs of the masses." Nor was there further mention of the role of the unions in the determination of working conditions and production.

These declarations opened what would be called the "trade union crisis" and seemed to mark a turning point. In reality the subsequent course of events showed that there was not a turning point but only phrasemongering and some measures intended to transform part of the union cadre who were applying the Party line—into "supermen" offered up as expiations to the discontent of the workers.

What actually happened was that following the intervention of May 26, 1935, the Party CC appointed a committee chaired by L. Kaganovich, instructed with the reorganization of union activities. This committee operated for several months without the trade unions being publicly informed. Its final decision was to suspend the elections. In November it invited the Central Council of Trade Unions to call a conference in which would take part the central committees of the USSR factories. The five central secretaries then publicly condemned the situation and openly admitted that there was a "union crisis." In the record of the conference can be read:

The trade unions are passing through a crisis.
Numerous union members express the justified

the union? they feel about union activity, they ask what is their role and how can they serve the proletarian state and the working masses? It is necessary on the part of unorganized workers and employees to introduce self-criticism of the most severe and pitiless type, a radical and decisive turning point in union activities. Scope for initiative from below must be allowed to only the working masses who succeed in bringing union activities to the necessary level."¹¹³

It was here that the pattern of developments began. The conference was followed by a wave of self-criticism by union officials. However this wave was not long in subsiding. During December talk of a "short crisis" disturbed. There was only mention of a certain union crisis.¹¹⁴ In January 1936 the self-criticism ceased. In fact relationships between the union organizations and the workers deteriorated to such an extent that the existence of anything that could be called "union life" was impossible.

In any case during 1936 these union problems retreated into the background. At that time there was beginning a period of acute social and political conflict within the dominant party itself. All the attention of the Party was reserved for the great mass and vast repressive operations. True the problem that the trade unions should have tackled continued to demand attention. This can be found in the central and regional press. For example in *Rabochiye puti*, the Workers Path, the newspaper of the Moscow Party regional committee:

Syndicates, the Party archive of that epoch, are made in the USA - *"United Correspondence"* which is very interesting for the light it throws on the nature of the problems posed by the workers in 1936. Thus one finds in this sympathetic article addressed to the regional Party committee members statements by the workers of a factory of the region (a factory to which no name had been given) the nature of this Party cadre. "In these areas, the situation demands extremely high moral standards, wages depending on living conditions, and a just and adequate wage, deplorable housing conditions, and a just demand the indifference of the union representatives."

For example the workers' workshop No. 2 of the Kuznetsov Factory wrote:

We have a great request. If you do not interfere we will all leave work. It is impossible to work further. We do not earn anything since the bosses are connected only with themselves and they receive salaries and give themselves premiums. Most bosses takes their cuts. For them there are spas, rest houses and sanatoria but there is nothing for the worker.

In the correspondence received by Rudaevsky he found a letter sent to him by Matelash. The author herself against herself made accusations made against her and accusations in letters sent to Rabochy Put' - acting if some charges she claims that she has no means of supporting demands addressed to the union, especially concerning the housing problem. Thus she writes:

I am not possible to repair the quarters of the workers. Safranova is now the worker lives in a place where it hay and the place is rotting. The whole roof is in and all the timbers are rotting. We began to proper organization to give her an apartment turned in the city council Comrade Pugachikov said that there were no money. There must be many unskilled people among us at the factory. I have investigated 843 workers quarters and found out that we have 43 workers who need apartments to live under very bad conditions and the apartments need repairs. These people come to the factory committee and ask for repairs for apartments and I have to refuse. They in turn tell me that they will write to Rabochy Put', will write to you.¹¹⁷

What the result of this correspondence was is unknown. It shows the desperation of certain workers to work through union representative. Some months later the plenum of the Party intended to moderate this exacerbating situation. As part of the Party and union culture in Smolensk as elsewhere evidently this was not enough to solve the difficulties which the workers were struggling. Not to establish relationships of trust between them and their own organizations.

In fact, despite the purges, the discontent of workers in regard to their union organizations deepened. At the beginning of 1937 the Party again attacked 'scapegoats'. This time it was the union representatives at the regional level who were accused. The first accusations were made in March 1937 against the union council of Leningrad region. For example the secretary of the regional Party committee declared:

The activity of the regional union council is completely rotten. One cannot see any sign of democracy in it. In many meetings of the presidium the statutory quorum was not reached and there have been many cases when Comrade Aleksiev, president of the union council, has sat quite alone.

To which Aleksiev replied:

There can be no doubt that there is no other organization in our country where the principles of democracy are flagrantly abandoned more than in the unions. The most blatant violations are considered normal. As a general rule, leaders of union officials have been appointed from above.¹²⁰

Some days later Shvernik condemned in his turn the far getting of the rights and needs of union members and added:

The unions have stopped caring about the workers' protection and security. Union activity among the masses is in a state of complete decay.

All these statements convey the distress of the political and union cadres in a situation where the union organizations were unable to fulfil (lacking both credibility and listeners) the role that the authorities wishes to assign to them.

It was in this situation that the signal was given for a new 'self-criticism' campaign. Shvernik set the example at the meeting of the Plenum of the Central Council of April 27, 1937.¹²¹ His contribution illustrates the state of decay in which the unions found themselves.¹²²

The Sixth Plenum decided that a draft statute should be prepared for the unions and submitted to a Seventh Plenum not later than July 1. In fact, the social crisis was too deep for this decision to have any result, even in a formal sense. A new plenum met only in September 1938, and no statute was submitted to it.¹²²

The Sixth Plenum also decided that the unions had to be "democratized" and that the secret ballot should be introduced for union meetings. In practice, this decision had no more effect than the others; choice of candidates was made at public meetings and the open vote was adopted for election of lower union officials as well as for those who served as auxiliaries of the labor inspectorate.¹²³

Finally, all the backwash created in the name of the "minor crisis" changed nothing, and did not prevent the growth of workers' discontent. To cope with this discontent, the path of repression was increasingly chosen.

Thus from the Eighteenth Party Congress, in March 1939 union questions received little attention. Unions were mentioned only in passing, alongside other organizations which were asked to contribute to the "development of socialist competition and the Stakhanovite movement and to ensure firm discipline and high labor productivity."¹²⁴

The actual "nationalization" of the trade unions facilitated a substantial deterioration in the living and working conditions of the working class, which will be seen when examining the development of the wage system, work norms, and the level of real wages.

IV Transformation of the wage and norm-fixing principles and some effects of this transformation

Throughout NEP II had been acknowledged that the development of production and the raising of the technical level of industry would have to be accompanied by a progressive levelling of wages. This principle was still accepted by the Seventh and Eighth trade union congresses.¹²⁵ In 1929, after the elimination

of the union leaders following the Eighth Congress, this principle of progressive wage leveling, inherited from the revolutionary ideology of 1917, was increasingly rejected. An opposite principle triumphed, that of "struggle against leveling."

(a) The "struggle against leveling"

The most systematic formulations on this question may be found in Stalin's words to a conference of industrial managers on June 23, 1931.

This speech—which at the time was often referred to as educating "the six new conditions of socialist construction"—included a violent attack against "the left or practice of wage equalization" and insisted on the need for wage differentiation. He criticized the "exalitarians" who ignored "the difference between skilled and unskilled work."¹²⁸ He emphasized "personal responsibility" in production and the need for "incentives for increasing the productivity of labor."¹²⁹ He also insisted on the necessity of profitability and a growth of accumulation within industry.¹³⁰

In the following years, enterprise managers and union cadres strove to put these principles into practice. They sought to use them as a means of combatting the fast rise of costs which characterized—despite the introduction of modern production techniques—1931 and 1932.¹³¹

At the Ninth Congress of trade unions (April 1932) Shvernik declared:

The six conditions of Comrade Stalin constitute the militant program of the union movement. He affirmed that the maximum introduction of piece rates on the basis of technical production norms is the most important union task.¹³²

Soon after this ceased to be officially regarded as a temporary measure. They were put forward as inherently socialist. As for the formulations of Marx declaring that piece wage is the form of wage most in harmony with the capitalist mode of production,¹³³ this was not mentioned. Nevertheless, for three

who acknowledge these formulations, the generalization of piece-rates reveals the extension of capitalist relationships in the 1930s.

Wage differentiation was extolled both as a means of increasing production and of encouraging the formation of technical cadres. For example, receiving a delegation of metallurgists on December 26, 1934, Stalin enunciated the formula:

It is necessary to organize wages so as to strengthen the decisive links of production and to impel people towards higher qualifications—that is what we must do in order to create a numerous army of technical cadres for production.¹³³

Differentiation of wages in accordance with qualifications and industries was also highly revealing of the predominant type of social relationships it portrayed. It portrayed the labor force as operating in effect as commodity whose current price depended on its reproduction cost and was influenced by supply and demand.

The struggle of the Party against leveling was part of a total perspective. It aimed at a differentiation of workers' wages¹³⁴ and at the growth of the gap between the wages of manual producers and those of enterprise managers, engineers, technicians and administrators. It will be seen what effects this struggle had on the real differentiation of wage and on the general picture of social relationships.

From 1931 the "struggle against leveling" was tightly linked up with an effort aimed at raising production norms and thus to workers which were indeed raised several times. But the question of norms revision was especially conspicuous during the Second Five-Year Plan.

(b) The upward revision of production norms

From the beginning of the First Five Year Plan the Party leadership put considerable pressure on all sectors to persuade them to obtain an increase in labor's output, by means of increasing its intensity and productivity. It was not surprising

question of increasing production but also of reducing production costs and improving enterprise profitability. The pressure that induced many enterprise managers to increase production norms by 10 or 20 percent which had the effect of reducing the wages of those workers who failed to increase their output in accordance with the increased norms applicable to them. Such norm increases occurred from 1929 and 1930. Enterprise managements which to a great extent justified themselves by reference to the higher output obtained by shock workers (*sotnarki*) taking part in socialist competition.

In 1931 and 1932 the raising of norms continued. The Party and the managing economic organizations tried in this way to compensate increased prime costs by a lowering of wage costs, the former being connected with the entry into production of a mass of inexperienced workers and to the disorganization of enterprises and construction sites resulting from the staggering scale of the tasks assigned to them.¹²

A certain resistance to increased norms then made itself appear not only in the working class but also in various organs entrusted with their industrial production norms but they wanted to take into account the effects of these increased norms on workers' health. This resistance was severely condemned by the Party leadership and its ideologists especially after the spring of 1931.

In April 1931 the fatigue theory was elaborated in the name of a Marxist Leninist conception of the physiology of work. Krasniansky & Kozulin (chief of the Institute of Worker Protection) dashed out at the physiologists who according to him seriously overestimated the subjective feeling of fatigue.¹³ Kozulin claimed that this subjective factor could be overcome by an effort of will and that work continued in spite of fatigue was not bad for the workers' health. Kozulin did not hesitate to describe as "class enemies" those who defended a contrary opinion. He wrote in particular:

The activation of hostile elements among a sector of the scientists reflects the class enemy's bitter resolve to do the maximum offensive of the proletarian. Decisively beaten up along the economic front the class enemy thinks he can find the last trench line

on a few sectors of the ideological front. There need be no doubt that he will also be crushed in this his final position.¹²⁷

Such formulations are typical of the recourse to a "proletarian ideology," constructed of all kinds of ingredients, to cover the policy of work intensification and the growth of exploitation to which the workers were subjected. These formulations were in preparation for the new campaign that was concurrent with the naming of work norms. Thus, on the occasion of the fourteenth anniversary of the October Revolution, the Kursk of the Heavy Industry committee of the area

Bolshevism must enter into scientific and technical calculations as a new category overwhelming all previous views of the bases of such calculations.¹²⁸

These standpoints began a rupture that was progressively more complete, with the previous practices for fixing production norms, practices which had tried to keep in mind the need for leisure time during the working day so as to avoid an excessive intensification of work.

It was in these conditions that new partial revisions of production norms appeared in 1932 and 1933. However the quest for increased industrial profits, required to cope with ever higher investment,¹²⁹ led the Party to demand in a resolution adopted in 1934 by the Seventeenth Congress a reorganization of the wage system,¹³⁰ and then, at the beginning of 1935 a substantial upward revision of production norms.¹³¹

The Stakhanovite movement, which began with the record output of August 31, 1935 by the miner Aleksei Stakhanov, made it possible to proceed to new and large upward revisions of the norms. These revisions were obtained by steering clear of the outputs obtained by average workers for the records of the Stakhanovites became one of the factors taken into account in establishing new production norms. Thus was abandoned the principle more or less accepted until then by which the output of the average worker was one of the main bases for the calculation of production norms.

The establishment of norms fixed in these new conditions was demanded by Stalin in a speech he made on November

17, 1935 at a conference of Stakhanovites. In this speech he gave a definition of the Stakhanovite movement by declaring that it should open the way to an upward revision of the production and productivity plans. He advanced the following formulation:

The Stakhanovite movement is a movement of male and female workers who set themselves the target of exceeding the existing technique, norms, of exceeding the forecast output capacities of extending the current plans of production and balances. This movement overthrows the old way of regarding techniques. It overthrows the old technical norms, the old forecast output capacities. It demands new, higher technical norms, output capacities, production plans. It has been summoned to make a revolution in our industry.¹⁴²

After affirming that "male and female workers" (by which must be understood Stakhanovites) had already rejected the old technical norms,¹⁴³ Stalin contrasted the Stakhanovites with workers who wanted to hold on to the old norms, whom he described as "retarded masses."¹⁴⁴ But he recognized that there was resistance among workers by indicating that "certain workers have attacked Stakhanov for his innovations."¹⁴⁵

Finally, Stalin demanded that new norms be adopted that took account of the production "records" without being total alignment with them.¹⁴⁶

At the beginning of 1936 the work norms were substantially increased. Simultaneously some piecework wage-rates were reduced.¹⁴⁷

At the same time the Central Institute of Labor (which customarily checked the compatibility of norms with workers' health) was abolished.¹⁴⁸ It had put up some opposition to these revisions.

In 1937-38 the production norms were again increased. A growing number of workers were not able to fulfill the man and norm that had been imposed and thereby lost part of their wages. In 1938 60 percent of metallurgical workers could not reach the norms. The same applied in 1940 for 21 to 32 percent of workers in all industries.¹⁴⁹

It should be emphasized that during the 1930s and especially after 1936, the number of norms was multiplied. For example, in 1939 in the Machine and Vehicle Construction Commission alone there were 2 026 000 norms.¹⁵¹

At the end of the 1930s more than 75 percent of wage-earners were on piece-rates (of whom about three-sevenths received a progressive piece-wage),¹⁵² about 10 percent received a wage with bonuses; only a minority were on a simple time-rate.

(c) Wage differentiation and the "economic atomization" of the workers

The struggle against the alleged leftist equalization of wages and the multiplication of norms and of the ways of calculating the receipts of the workers, led to an increased differentiation in the working class's living conditions and to an "economic atomization" of that class.

The starting point of this change was the growing extent of wage categories. Whilst by virtue of decisions taken in 1934 there were eight categories for workers' wages, the number of these scales was sometimes increased, during the 1930s to eleven (for example, in the mines and metallurgy).¹⁵³

The complexity of the system was increased by the existence of three distinct wage scales, according to whether it was a matter of piece-work within mass production, piece-work outside mass production, or hourly work.¹⁵⁴

The differences in reality between workers' wages were increased still more by the existence of different basic norms according to industries, locations, and enterprises. In fact each year, the government and the central economic organs fixed the amount, in money terms, by hour or by day of the wage corresponding to the first scale for each enterprise. They fixed at the same time the maximum amount of wages the enterprise was allowed to pay out. In practice it is impossible to calculate the maximum coefficient of inequality, but was certainly much more than 10 in 1936 at the level of average earnings. Obviously it was greater at the level of individual wages.

One example illustrates the size of wage differentials towards the middle of the Second Five year Plan, at a time when the Stakhanovite movement was having its first effects.

The differentials between the extremes of pay the workers belonging to different industries were obviously greater. In fact in 1936 about two or three million workers earned less than 100 rubles per month,¹² whilst workmen of the Kuganovka factory in Moscow received several hundred rubles per month, upto 1,000 rubles.¹³

By causing a drop in the wages of those who could not achieve the new norms,¹⁴ as was the case for numerous workers, the Stakhanovite movement helped to increase wage inequalities.

However the growth of these inequalities was far from solely attributable to the influence of Stakhanovism. For example from 1934 the growth of such inequalities was a very active one as can be seen from the quoted figures and the statistical analyses by A. Bergman comparing 1928 and 1934 wages and the distribution by levels of income of Soviet and American wages. Bergman concluded that so far as wage inequalities are concerned capitalist practices were stronger in the USSR.¹⁵

In 1934 wage inequalities could still appear as normal because numerous products were rationed. It was different after 1935, when rationing was abolished. At that time prices and wages simultaneously rose, but the wage increases bore first the higher paid more than the lower paid.¹⁶

Two more things should be said about the wage system.

(1) First it will be noticed that each plant or commissariat established its own list defining the nature of different jobs and indicating the places they occupied in the wage scale. This did not specify the qualities one required to do a given job.¹⁷

(2) Secondly, decisions about the education of workers to jobs were taken by heads of workshops or foremen. This practice was confirmed by a decision of the CI and Sverdlovsk on May 2nd 1936. This decision strengthened the power of these instruments of management who also had to check and observe wage rates and work norms to improve technique and take rationalization measures.¹⁸

The procedure for fixing wages illustrates a clearly important aspect of the development of capitalist relations of production.

within state enterprises. A more complete appreciation of the development of these relationships during the 1930s may, however, call for taking equally into account the evolution of the intensity and productivity of labor.

(2) The evolution of wages

The complexity and scale of questions raised by an analysis of the evolution of wages during the 1930s means that only a general view may be taken of this evolution, covering only real average wages.¹² In fact, because of the growth of wage inequality, the figures quoted underestimate the decline in real average wages of workers at the bottom of the wage scale. At the same time, these figures obscure the growth of real wages for fixing those at the summit of the income pyramid.¹³

The years 1928 and 1932 witnessed severe drops in real average wages. In fact, these years were characterized by very grave shortages of numerous products, and retail prices rose faster than the nominal average wage. Retail price increases can be estimated only roughly because they varied substantially between the different supply sources (state trade, cooperative trade, or "free market"). Taking into account only the first two categories (although the amounts obtainable from them were insufficient) the real average wage in 1932 had fallen by about 11.12 percent compared to 1928.¹⁴ Authors who have tried to take into account the evolution of retail prices other than official prices and of the need to obtain supplies at such prices, arrive at the drop considerably greater than that of the real average wage, on the order of 30 percent.¹⁵ Nevertheless it seems that this presents a somewhat too dark picture of the fall experienced in 1932 by the real consumption of the working class.¹⁶

The fall registered between 1928 and 1932 for the average real wage was obviously in complete contradiction to the forecasts of the Five Year Plan.¹⁷ Nothing was said about this in the official report of the results of this plan. In the report on the plan that he presented on January 7, 1933 to the Plenum of the CC, Stalin claimed that the "average annual wage of

workers and employees in large state industry was given by 6.1 percent compared to 1932¹² which was only true for the nominal wage.

In 1933 the average real wage again fell; this was the year when the food supply crisis was most grave. It is not possible to put forward a statistically based evaluation of this new fall for no meaningful figure is available covering the evolution of prices in the state and cooperative sectors. However, it may be said that agriculture, prices on the free (black) market then grew by 40 percent whilst the average nominal wage grew by only 9.7 percent.¹³ In 1934 the average real wage was still below that of 1932 although it is impossible to put a figure to it.¹⁴

Rationing was entirely abolished in October 1935 and state and cooperative trade prices were increased. This increase of prices affected above all the workers, but whose purchases made in the framework of rationing had been a main source of front-supply. The extreme variety of prices which were typical of 1934 makes impossible a statistically based evaluation of the change in the real average wage.¹⁵

In 1937 it can be estimated the average real wage of workers and employees was about 30.60 percent of the 1928 level (or the 1927-28 level),¹⁶ which was an improvement of about 20 percent compared to 1932. This was far from the targets of the Second Five Year Plan (1933-7) which forecast a doubling of the real average wage in industry.¹⁷

Judging from the price and wage statistics the real average wage grew in 1938 and 1939. In fact shortages returned on the black market,¹⁸ so it is probable that the real average wage did not in fact increase in those two years. In 1940 after ignoring the shortages the real wage was about 10 percent lower than in 1937.¹⁹ The Third Five Year Plan (1938-41) which forecast an increase of 25 percent for real wages was no more forthcoming in this field than it had been in the previous plans.²⁰

Finally in 1940 the real average wage of industrial workers and employees was about 47.47 percent of that of 1928.²¹

Many other indices of the material situation of urban workers make equally clear a substantial decline in the living conditions of the latter. Thus the number of square meters of

accommodation available per own inhabitant fell from 4.2 between 1927/28 and 1937.¹² However the situation of workers especially married workers was much worse. These figures suggest for example in Moscow in 1937, 40 percent of tenants (that is households of one or more persons) had more than one room, 40 percent had only one room, 21.6 percent occupied part of a room (or as the term was at the time a corner), 7 percent lived in a corner or kitchen, and 25 percent in dormitories usually women barracks.¹³

The situation was just as catastrophic outside the cities. Stepanov, a report of the Party committee and the executive that preceded this report illustrates the case of industrial workers accommodated in barracks. The latter were very crowded and hardly maintained. Often water leaked at the roof "right on to the workers' beds. Sanitary facilities were practically non-existent". At construction sites there were neither kitchens nor canteens. A female Party member pointed out that many women workers "lived virtually on the streets, some of them threatened to commit suicide".¹⁴

It should be added that during the first three Five Year Plans an increasing proportion of workers was entitled to the benefit of social legislation. In fact however the law was applied without restrictions only to workers who worked full-time only long in the same enterprise and had no right to prolonged leave or justified absence. It often happened that day homes were forced and priority was given to men and Stakhanovites. So between 1928 and 1937 the real average wage and the social benefits of most workers went into decline.

The Stakhanovite movement descended in the last years of the decade and on the spread of piece rates and bonuses it mainly of workers who had fixed employment. This movement was a way of escaping of multi-hour overtime and even for obtaining an extra level of pension. On

While the real average wage declined by more than 40 percent between 1928 and 1937 the productivity and intensity of its related considerably and hence there was a significant acceleration of industrial workers.¹⁵

The general development of the 1930s a developmental crisis, heralded by a substantial lowering of real wages, a sharp rise

the rate of exploitation and a decline of living conditions raises numerous social, ideological and political problems. Briefly these problems are of two types (1) what were the social and political forces which inflicted such defeats on the Soviet workers? (2) how were these defeats inflicted? For the moment, we will concentrate our attention on this last question and will reserve the fourth volume of this work for an attempt to answer the first.

V The circumstances of the workers' defeat of the 1930s

When one analyses the conditions that led to the serious defeat of the workers in the 1930s one has to acknowledge that the root of these defeats lay in the extreme division of the workers and their economic and social atomization. This has already been mentioned, but now it behoves us to see what made possible these phenomena possible and the way in which they manifested themselves and developed.

(a) *The expropriation of the workers' organization*

At the end of the 1920s the starting point for the workers' defeats was the dismantling of the last organizations in which they had faith and which were still in existence namely the trade unions.

Whatever the limits put on union action during the NEP, the unions remained, nevertheless, organizations through which workers could put up a more or less organized resistance against the decline of their living and working conditions. This resistance was expressed through strikes (admittedly rare but nevertheless effective) and through negotiations in which the union representatives fought for certain worker demands which could be expressed, more or less, at union meetings and union congresses. The elimination of the old union cadres and leaders, from the end of the 1920s, and their replacement by cadres and leaders who were above all concerned with the

increase of production and productivity indicates that the workers suffered the expropriation of the last forms of their own organization that the state tolerated. From that point the unions became a state institution, willingly ceasing to be a class organization.

During the 1920s the authorities multiplied measures needed to prevent the reconstitution of true worker organizations; all attempts in this direction were brutally repressed by the police as "anti-Soviet."

There were many reasons for the authorities' hostility toward real unions. There were economic reasons for example, which served to improve wages and living conditions would reduce the surplus value that might be accumulated. There were ideological reasons because the Bolshevik Party presented itself as the "vanguard of the working class" so any other organization of the workers, in its eyes could only represent backward elements subjected to the influence of "other classes." There were political reasons, because any union that was not a Party-controlled apparatus could only seem to be an "organized pole of opposition."²⁸ Two observations must be made.

First, even during the NEP, "the idea that the unions should defend the workers against managers was such anathema to the government's economic policy had never had the Party's acceptance of the Party. As J. Sapiro remarks, this was reflected with an 'old anti-union tradition' of the Bolsheviks."

Second, the anti-union ideology of the 1930s was strengthened by what J. Sapiro just hobby terms "anti-worker workers," which presented such an idealized image of the proletariat (which would be entirely devoted to the state's requirements) for production, and regard the state as its own [that the genuine working class front] itself devalued. It was said, "Let's abolish" but 'party bourgeois' or peasant and the Party therefore did not want to allow it to organize the genuinely

Thus the destruction of any real union organization was necessarily written into the Party's policy and also was facilitated by the objective circumstances of industrialization (a matter to which we shall return).

The major effect of this destruction was the disempowerment of the working class as such, it having in effect been deprived of

a last remaining form of organization and the traditional parties had been tied to them. In fact what happened here at the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s was a polarization of the Chamber Movement. The latter by establishing the power of the Bolshevik Party and identifying the latter with that of the working class expropriated from the latter the area of independent struggle. In order to be in a position to then reach its own aims the working class would have had to build new organizations and work out a strategy of struggle according to what historical circumstances rendered impossible. As it happened at the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s the process of destroying the union organizations was carried through to the end.

This destruction produced a bundle of negative effects for the authorities themselves. On the one hand it produced a negative effect on the growth of social labor productivity for in the existing credit and thus growth assumed a fully armed working class capable of conducting organized struggle. In the absence of such a class accumulation took forms that were very partial and its productive effect had a specific character this is a point to which part 4 of this article will return. On the other hand the same concentration of the union organizations made the workers indifferent to the union producer organizations that replaced them. This induced the workers to develop forms of resistance against which the authorities could use only means of repression whose effectiveness from the production point of view remained very limited. Hence the attempt (and it has been shown) to restrict the unions.

Although the destruction of the union organizations was one of the prerequisites for the worker collapse of the 1930s it is also true that this destruction was made possible by certain objective circumstances such as the mass reversal of the worker ranks and the various ways in which these were divided during this period.

(2) The mass "renegade" of worker ranks in the 1920s

There having been no detailed investigation it is only possible to give very general indications about that process of reversion.

of the ranks of the workers which developed during the war. Some figures do permit an approximate measure of the scope of this process. One may note firstly that the number of wage earners in main industry rose from 3.8 million in 1932 to about 8 million of whom 6 million were workers; at the beginning of the Third Five-Year Plan,¹⁰ an increase of 4.2 million. On the other hand, it is generally estimated that during this period about one million workers left the ranks of the working class because cadres of production administration and party (or subsequently with an adjustment for renewal due to death or retirement) is renewal simply ensured by the children of workers. It is possible to estimate that the great majority of workers in the late 1930s consisted of workers lacking any experience either of a union organization more or less truly representative of them or of collective struggle and this had major ideological and political effects.

From the mid 1930s the majority of industrial workers was a living tradition of collective struggle for the defense of their interests. These workers were strangers to their superiors, who imposed severe controls which they tried to evade by their own gumption and by changing their place of work. Ties of solidarity were only with difficulty established between workers who were barely acquainted with each other and they were vulnerable to the "can-tins" and strictures of enterprise managements and all the more so since he had practically ceased to function except as functionaries of the party, polity and as controllers of decisions made by the enterprise cadres. Additionally many workers knew that they were trusted with distrust by the party and enterprise cadres who among them petty bourgeois elements entrenched by force that were equated with political and indifferent middle-class cadres often treated them even as servants by means of their presumed bullock origin and of the sympathy they were said to have for the rich peasants. The press of the 1930s often described workers as toads and shirkers.

Thus the various structures that the workers had been given virtually no more or less as their own (trade unions, Soviets and the party) despite contradictions which the authorities had placed them in opposition to the workers completely ceased to function as such. These structures showed themselves

to be indifferent and even hostile to their interests and by an attempt by the workers to organise themselves. The bosses were not concerned about the permanent power by the workers working and living conditions. They cared only about output growth and productivity. They lived better than ordinary workers. They belonged to a different world. Workers and their collectives - them that is from above.

Being thus deprived of the means of resistance the latter to the aggression of exploitation and arbitrary decisions and the neutralisation of these means of collective resistance setting up against innumerable obstacles including price repression and the weak social fabric the workers had recourse either to passive forms of resistance absenceism frequent changes of enterprise (despite all the regulations existing) or to the growth of productivity bid resistance by poor upkeep of equipment, etc.

These forms of resistance at the time seemed the only open feasible. They did nothing to unify the workers on the contrary they divided them. However they were widely practised the majority of the workers being indifferent to the anti-labour productive enthusiasm and to promises of a better life. Clashes e.g. conforming with the orders of the cadres.

Apart from the majority of workers who resisted the appearance for production there was a minority that responded to such appeals. This minority showed included the older workers especially men, whom the party and trade unions treated with due respect and who benefited from wages higher than those of the great mass of workers. It included also a small part of the younger workers. These comparatively few workers hoped to be able to improve their living and work by supporting the industrialisation policy participating in the quest for greater productivity and improving their professional skills. The existence of these active elements helped the development of Soviet industry.

During the First Five-Year Plan two movements with very different characteristics mobilised at the producer level: these more active worker strata (socialist competition) and the Stakhanovite movement.

(c) Socialist competition

At the time the First Five-Year Plan was launched the party leadership laid emphasis on what it called the 'Bolshevik offensive' in the fields of production and construction. According to the slogans of this period as they were developed, in particular by Stalin, the key to the success of this 'offensive' lay in the organization by the party of an "extensive socialist competition and mass enthusiasm for work."¹⁴ Stalin then evoked an appeal of the Sixteenth Party Conference on April 29, 1929 which had insisted on the large-scale development of "socialist competition."¹⁵ On this occasion, he declared that the most remarkable feature of competition is the radical revolution it entrains in the concepts held by working people, because it transforms work into a matter of honor a matter of glory a matter of value and happiness.¹⁶

This competition, combined with the reconstruction of the technical base should, according to the official spokesman, permit an accelerated rhythm of industrial development described as 'Bolshevik'¹⁷ and reported as indispensable in a period in which it was claimed that "rhythms decide everything."

Already in May 1929, Stalin had insisted on the importance that he gave to competition (sovereign or brutal) as a communist method to build socialism and he contrasted it with bourgeois-style competition of the capitalist variety:

The principle of competition is defeat and death for some and victory and domination for others. The principle of socialist emulation is comradely assistance by the foremost to the laggards, so as to achieve an advance by all.¹⁸

These appeals by Stalin and other leaders for the Party, unions and trade to initiate, from above, socialist competition which was based on promises by certain workers (and stock workers or peasants) to exceed the utenti norms through a system of 'socialist challenges' which could pit one worker against others either by factory brigade or by individual. In reality far from resting on help and

leadership — as Stalin claimed — it developed contradictions among the workers. It permitted a raising of norms¹⁷ if competition took shape; it was not because work had become a matter of "honor and glory" but because a strong pressure was put on workers, and above all because he who triumphed in this competition received big bonuses and considerable allocation of consumer goods. It was in no sense a matter of a new attitude towards work nor of solidarity but rather of egotism and acquisitiveness.¹⁸ Behind the trumpeting it was the latter which really suited the authorities because it permitted output growth while at the same time dividing the workers even more.

Measures taken by the party played a decisive role in the development of "social competition". These measures led to agreements between udarniki and enterprise managers. By virtue of these agreements the udarniki undertook to provide a certain volume of production (above the current norms) to be paid out (not more than three minutes lateness per month) to subscribe a certain amount to the State Loan and give at least one day a month of extra work. On its part, the management gave a certain number of privileges to the udarniki prior to the housing waiting-lists, allocation of foodstuffs in short supply (important during a period of shortages), grants for professional training, the possibility of taking courses during working hours, favorable treatment in matters of social security and priority access to holiday homes. In addition, the udarniki might receive bonuses which themselves carried material advantages in their own right.

The udarnik movement, by the privilege it accorded with workers, made many workers hostile to shop workers. This hostility appeared from 1958.¹⁹ It increased particularly when enterprise managers used the "production records" established by the udarniki in raise production norms.

The placing of the udarniki in their own stratum, cut off from the mass of workers, had another aspect: the differentiation from this stratum of basic production values and minor social stratigraphic classes. This became a large-scale phenomenon in the first half of the 1960s. It brought with it various tensions between. On the one hand it "took out" the especially active workers from production and from the working class. On the other hand

it attracted the pushers toward "socialist competition." In these circumstances the movement was forced to take a more and more businesslike direction. Very quickly the vocational schools cut their worker intake and recruited most of all among ordinary school leavers. The fact of being an *udarnik* therefore gave progressively less opportunity to enter administration or production at cadre level. "Socialist competition" consequently ceased to play the role that it had played at the beginning of the 1930s. However, it did not disappear completely. It remained as one of the means of the disposal of enterprise managements through the privileges granted to participants to pursue the increase of production and the reduction of costs.

(d) The Stakhanovite movement

In 1935 the Stakhanovite movement rose into view. It might seem to be only a variant of socialist competition, but in reality it was something very different. Socialist competition in *udarniks* resulted above all in an intensification of labor. Stakhanovism intended to transform the production process, the place and time of different ingredients of production, and all this on a basis of two of worker initiative. From this point of view Stakhanovism bore a revolutionary character, even though accompanied also by an intensification of labor and an accentuation of capitalist features of production.

Stakhanov was a coalminer who achieved his first major reward on August 11, 1935 in the Tsentral'naya Artyukhovka mine. Before his method was introduced, coal hewing was done in a face 85 meters long and 10 meters wide. The face had eight work positions to which in all were allocated 17-18 workers. The latter did both cutting and propping. In addition five laborers looked after the clearing away of the coal. At the six hours spent below two-and-one-half to three were spent coal-hewing and the rest on propping. The picks were employed therefore for only about half the time. Moreover, only two shifts actually cut coal, the third shift being used exclusively for repairs and for preparing the work of the following shift. In practice, the picks were used only for six hours out of eight—that is, at one third of capacity.

In the circumstances of this mine and with this organization of the work process, the 17-18 hewers-proppers obtained an output of 250 tons, or 14.7 tons per worker on average, or 11 tons when the laborers were taken into account.¹¹

Stakhanov introduced the following modifications to the production process. First, a single worker was to carry out the entire hewing and accordingly utilize his pick completely. Other workers prepared the work and did all the other tasks (prapping and coal-handling) during the hewing. Henceforth a face would require only five hewers (four permanent and one to replace another at certain times) and five laborers, that is 10 workers instead of 23. A team organized in this way could cut 300-310 tons of coal per shift (instead of 250). Individual output exceeded, on average, 32 tons per day instead of 11—an increase of about three times.

The type of transformation that Stakhanov introduced in his mine spread rapidly. In September and October mention was made of quite a few miners who fulfilled their norms by 500, 600 and 1000 percent; a miner named Mokar Lashitsa even achieved 2274 percent of his norm.¹² The movement spread to other industries: to the Gorky Automobile Works (where the smith Busygin became famous for his records); other engineering industries, the textile industry, etc.

11. The nature of the changes in the production process induced by Stakhanovism

The nature of these changes may perhaps be illuminated by an analysis of the most important of them, carefully described in the Soviet press in 1935 and 1936. In this connection the most revealing are initiatives of Stakhanov himself, Busygin and the textile worker Vinogradova.¹³

In summary these changes had the following features: (1) they led to deepening of the capitalist division of labor. They "liberated" skilled workers from secondary tasks and transferred the latter to unskilled workers. Thus they encouraged a greater division of the labor collective between a small number of skilled workers and a relatively large number of unskilled. The polarization

which characterizes collective labor in capitalism was therefore manifested in the example of Stakhanov cited above. 17-18 skilled workers with five unskilled gave place to one skilled with five unskilled. In the case of the transformation of the production process by the woman worker Vinogradova who worked on Northrop weaving looms, there were nine skilled workers and four unskilled in a team before the transformation. After the transformation there was one skilled worker and twelve unskilled.¹⁹ Since the unskilled were paid less, the average cost of labor was reduced and profitability enhanced (2) it allowed, in general, an intensification of utilization of the work instruments already existing. Thus, in the case of Stakhanov, the picks were bunched more compactly, utilized). There was therefore an economy in fixed capital and a possible increase in the rate of profit. (3) It resulted in a raising of the intensity of labor, thanks to the elimination of "dead time". This can be seen in the case of Stakhanov or we as of Burygin, who packaged the tasks in such a way that one worker repeated at a rapid rhythm the same movements.²⁰ The intensification of labor can be clearly seen through a report describing the work of Burygin's team:

The entire brigade is in the grip of a tremendous work fury. It is simply impossible to come up to one of these people to distract him for a minute. No one smokes, no one talks. I have visited many camps, but nowhere have I seen such an ecstasy of work.²¹

This intensification of work was also obtained by anarchist movements with the aim of eliminating any that were superfluous,²² which permitted an acceleration of the work rhythm. An analogous result was attained in numerous cases by a reorganization of the workplace.

As Marx has shown, this type of transformation of the production process (or) states a tightening of the working day leading to an absolute production of surplus value.²³

Generally speaking, the dominant aspect of the Stakhanov movement was the adaptation of labor that was able to the demands of a full utilization of labor that was dead thus permitting an increased rate of profit.

Thus the transformations of the production process induced by the Stakhanovite movement were totally expressed in the capitalist form of this process. They corresponded to its final development. They did not open the way to a collective mastery of production but rather to its paroxysm and to a destroying and increased intensification of labor. They originated from the same trends as did Taylorism but they transformed one of the workers into a shift or brigade leader.

However, an examination of the Stakhanovite movements suggests that, apart from these dominant characteristics (those which attracted the intense attention of the Party, unions, enterprise managers, press, etc.), it was also characterized by a certain development of technical innovations put forward by the Stakhanovites. But this was a secondary characteristic, the ideological and political conditions which would have allowed the development of an innovative movement from below and not been created, largely because of the prevailing principle that changes in matters of equipment could be undertaken only by engineers and cadres. In this field, workers could not take the initiative. But they could make proposals leading to a better utilization of existing equipment, to an intensification of labor and to economies in wages.

Despite their expression in the capitalist form of the production process, the transformations of the process induced by the Stakhanovite movement nonetheless had originally a unique character. This was connected with the fact that usually Stakhanovism developed from a worker initiative, an initiative by workers who were relatively skilled and who encouraged, and sometimes imposed, certain transformations of the production process.

(2) The circumstances in which the Stakhanovite movement appeared

The continuous equipment effort made between 1926 and 1935 provided the material and tools for the development of the Stakhanovite movement. During this period nearly all branches of production were given new work tools much improved on the older ones. However the utilization of these new instruments

was very effective the production process not having been transformed so much as those new means allowed. The men were therefore reluctant to undergo utilization and there was a large reserve of unused production capacity.²⁰³ The reason why such a large gap appeared between physical production capacity and actual production were numerous (the most important was the inability of organs and associations to pass necessary changes in the production process). This was essentially political. It was connected with the passive resistance that the workers put up against the raising of wages and the intensification of work. This resistance held back the full utilization of productive capacity. The Stakhanovite movement issuing from the initiative of a part of the working class took advantage of this unutilized capacity.

The ideological conditions for the development of the movement consisted of the emergence of new contingents of skilled workers who had acquired enough knowledge and authority to suggest and even impose certain changes in productive process (merely at least as those transformations belonged to the capitalist form of production relations). It promoted the aims of industrialization. These ideological conditions comprised also the seeing and acceptance by workers of the material privileges that their initiative was bringing. The Stakhanovites thus allowed themselves to be separated from other workers and this separation in self-chosen way was as antagonism for the initiatives of the Stakhanovites as an upward revision of production norms which gave lower wages for those who did not adapt themselves to new norms (which were imposed by a large part of the working class).

This opposition led to numerous incidents between the bureaucrats and ordinary workers (incidents that were often the news of press of the time). For example, the Stakhanovites had certain basic standards and if they threatened to lay a worker off they were beaten up by those who had different standards. The latter it turned out could be sentenced to several years in camp or prison.²⁰⁴

Other ideological contradictions were necessary for the development of the Stakhanovite movement. It was necessary that those who joined this movement adhered to the party.

wage differentiation proclaimed as "just and necessary" since 1931. The quest for personal advantages was certainly not the only ideological base for the rise of Stakhanovism but it was an important part of it. In this connection, it is highly significant that the movement took off precisely when rationing was ended, that is, when the high incomes gained by Stakhanovites could actually be used to buy products that henceforth were "freely" available. And the fact that the majority of those who participated in the Stakhanovite movement were not Party members suggests that political motives played only secondary role in this movement.

In sum, at its beginning, Stakhanovism corresponded to a workers' initiative coming from a narrow stratum of skilled workers, mainly those wishing to put their capacities to "gainful use". This movement was made possible by the ideological transformations that had occurred from 1931, especially by the decline of egalitarian ideas that had been widespread among the working class at the end of the 1920s.

3. The seizure from above of the Stakhanovite movement

From the end of the summer of 1935 the initiatives of Stakhanov and his imitators were utilized by the unions, Party, and managers of the economy to promote a countrywide production campaign. The quantitative results that were obtained were above all what attracted attention whilst the effects of Stakhanovism on the quality and regularity of production were ignored. Those who took the risk of warning against such effects were violently attacked in the press and easily treated as "class enemies".²⁰⁶

In October 1935 the first inter-union conference of Stakhanovites was held. One Stakhanovite still tried to raise questions about the nature of the movement that had just been born. He was brusquely interrupted by Pyatakov, then deputy commissar for Heavy Industry, who declared:

Why take the trouble to find a definition of Stakhanovism? A Stakhanovite is someone who shatters all the norms.²⁰⁷

The tone was thus given: Stakhanovism was to be a war much no against existing norms. This 'utilization' of Stakhanovism was confirmed by the same Pyatakov in his closing speech to this conference, in which he claimed:

The essence of the Stakhanovite movement consists in that the Stakhanovite shatters with his own hands, in practice and not only in theory, all the so-called technical work norms. Norms based on technique—this was only a ghost intended to frighten us, a brake to hold us back.²⁰

A few days before, the newspaper of the Heavy Industry Commissariat had gone so far as to say that the 'ghost of production capacities and norms' 'should be sent to the devil'²¹. It was to these unilaterally "volunteerist" claims that Stalin alluded in order to criticise them, at the first conference of Stakhanovites of the USSR. Thus in his speech of November 17, 1935 he declared:

There are some who say we no longer need technical norms. That is false, comrades. Even more, it is absurd. Without technical norms the planned economy is impossible. Technical norms are a great regulatory force, which in production organizes the great masses of workers around the advanced elements of the working class.²²

Following this speech, Stalin said that new technical norms should be adopted, and he specified that these new norms should be about halfway "between the present norms and those that have been established by the Stakhanov and Ruygin".²³ This latter formulation was then used to fix new norms not on the basis of a concrete analysis of the circumstances of production, but on the basis of estimates purely subjective, of the 'possibilities' and this despite the warnings, perhaps ambiguous, in the resolution adopted by the plenum of December 1935.²⁴ For example, the annual plan of 1936 provided for an increase of 21 percent in the norms of heavy industry, 23 percent of light industry, and 30 percent

of construction. To match these forecasts the plan fixed the respective average wage increases of these industries at 12, 14 and 16 percent.²¹⁰ At the beginning of 1936 these forecasts were turned "upside down." In fact, the industrial conferences at this time raised norms by 30-40 percent in the engineering industry 34 percent in the chemical industry, 31 percent in electricity generation, and so on.²¹¹

Such norm increases led the enterprise managers to strive for a considerable increase of work intensity. Also, they often led to disorganization of production, especially when actual conditions did not permit them to obtain regularly the level of productivity that had been forecast. Lastly, they imposed loss of wages on workers who could not fulfil the new norms, either because they were paid piece-rates or because they were demoted because they could not fulfil the norms of their category. In general, the demotion of a worker from one category to the next one below corresponded, in 1936, to a wage loss of 50 rubles per month in industry. (in Category I the basic wage was then 300 rubles.)²¹² Lacking detailed figures, it is impossible to know what proportion of workers was able to fulfil or overfulfil the new norms, thereby raising their incomes, and what proportion consequently suffered a wage reduction. In any case, it is certain that the introduction of new norms increased the real differentiation of wages and exacerbated the division of the working class.²¹³

(4) The longer-term effects of the Stakhanovite Movement and its transformations

The bold taken from above of what had once been essentially a worker initiative tended to transform the "Stakhanovite movement" into its opposite. More and more often, "Stakhanovites" were organized by enterprise managers, wishing for recognition by the central leadership, who induced their workers, to "break records." These managers thereby received bonuses, bonuses, and promotions. Some of the workers who had participated in the "records" were also rewarded.

However, performances obtained in such circumstances could only be temporary as a rule. In reality, they often disorganized

production during a more or less brief period an intensive effort was achieved. Stocks of raw materials were used up and slave labour intensity was pushed up to a level that could not last. Thus the records were usually followed by a period of production decline which took output below the previous level consequently quite often, the average output of a period which covered the records and the period which followed them was often below the average obtained before the coming of Stakhanovism.

St. I. more notorious to the workers' Stakhanovism, this transformed became the pretext for frequent violations of the labor legislation multiplication of extra hours (known as sur's rotation at their workplace of workers especially young workers for two consecutive shifts, etc.), and infringement of safety regulations in the mines, for example this latter gave rise to grave accidents which later would be punished by death sentences for the engineers regarded as responsible for them.¹⁷

So that the 'Stakhanovite movement' in spite of everything should continue, enterprise managers accorded privileges to a minority of workers, foremen and shift leaders. They promised also to satisfy wider worker demands, notably to provide better work tools but often they did not keep these promises.¹⁸

The Stakhanovite movement in this way came into contradiction with one of its main fundamentals, of obtaining a substantial long term growth of production based on a more intensive utilization of existing equipment.

In fact 1935 (which had been declared as the Stakhanovite Year) was characterised by serious difficulties in the field of production by fluctuations in the progress of the latter and by the non fulfillment of plans in the main branches of industry (for example coal production in which the Stakhanovite movement had been born, reached 126 million tons in 1935, whereas the plan had set a target of 135 million thus the plan was fulfilled by only 91 percent (and not exceeded as had been forecast at the beginning of the year). Compared to 1935 the increase was 12.8 percent a smaller increase than in 1933 (+ 16.4 percent).¹⁹

Even during the course of 1936 the inability of the Stakhanovite movement thus transformed to secure a fast and

rising because of increased production was condemned by the Party leadership and the press. The press stated that large percentages of workers were not succeeding in fulfilling the norm norms including those in the Stakhanov teams where workers were working well. In the other hand internal documents of the Party of this period note the bias towards the majority of the older skilled workers in Stakhanovism and even their bias towards Stakhanovites' privilege. They also said that wage increases brought a them make the experience of the worst paid workers less enterprises or regions where they began to get better wages.²²¹ In general at the end of 1916 Soviet basic industry had reached its annual plan target in numbers known only to the extent of 59 percent.²²²

Finally the chaotic revision of norms due to Stakhanovism was a source of discontent because it gave rise to very wide inequalities than workers regarded as justified. This feeling of injustice was all the greater to the extent that these wage inequalities had grown in an arbitrary way thanks to the irregular ways in which the title of Stakhanovite with its great advantages was awarded. Thus in 1916 the proportion Stakhanovites varied considerably between different factories and workshops without the reasons for these variations being clearly apparent. G. Friedman who visited a certain number of enterprises in the summer of 1916 estimated the average proportion of Stakhanovites in these enterprises at 15 percent but he said there were discrepancies that were hard to explain. For example in a small sealings workshop the Kuzanovich ball bearing plant in Moscow there were 21.5 percent of workers overfulfilling their norms by more than 100 percent but out of 542 workers there were only 11 Stakhanovites and 34 others. In another workshop where there was the same percentage of high output there were 20 Stakhanovites and 211 others. G. Friedman also remarks that the biggest wage increases apparently travelled most of all the workers having the best equipment.²²³

In fact from the beginning of 1916 the Party leadership was worried about different aspects of the situation it could see developing. At first it warned against the increased pressure developing. At first it warned against the increased pressure put on workers by enterprise managers. In March the Leningrad "Pravda" editorial was entitled "Overstrain the Workers".

sabotage of the Stakhanovite movement,"¹²¹ writing without several articles of this type."¹²² Such articles were often interpreted by regional and local Party offices as giving the signal for a repression to be carried out against engineers and technicians on the lower levels. This interpretation was not always agreed by the central leadership of the Party, which at the time wanted sanctions against lower administration and cadres to be limited to extreme distortions of the "Stakhanovite movement." For example, *Pravda* of June 2, 1936 condemned the "programs against managers" which, it said, typified the interventions of certain regional Party authorities (especially in the Donbas). Five days later the Party's official newspaper even stated that those who talked about a massive sabotage of the Stakhanovite movement by technical cadres in effect were helping the enemies of the movement.¹²³ Soon afterward *Pravda* wrote about the need to watch over the material interests of the technical cadres and condemned those who opposed price rates and favored egalitarianism.¹²⁴ These positions were still being defended at the beginning of the summer; the difficulties of the development of the Stakhanovite movement were being mainly attributed to "dizziness" brought on by the cultural excesses, and were still not attributed to sabotage. The regional and local Party offices were ordered to help the industrial cadres instead of accusing them.¹²⁵

The moderation which the Party leadership called for in the treatment of industrial cadres tended to be abandoned during the summer of 1936. The reasons for this abandonment were various and numerous, with each rotuting the others. At the economic level, the inadequacy of the results obtained coincided with the ambitions at the beginning of the year. This had a decisive role. At the social level the evident growth of class content on the part of workers confronted with repressive measures, increased wage inequalities, intensified work and the multiplication of accidents, led to the punishment of industrial cadres who were blamed for this. Contradictions between the chiefs of the central departments and enterprise managers also tended to be exacerbated. The latter were and more sought to escape the obligations placed on them by the former and they often deceived the central organs by presenting a deceptively embellished picture of the results obtained or

the fact was that they managed to do so the price of a massacre. In the second half of 1946 was characterized by a series of uprisings of workers. The general strike brought against the workers of the left opposition, including the Komsomol and their local sections as well as of the Trotskyites, the rank-and-file of the masses.

The multiplication and the merging of contradictions between the Party and the start of the general strike and protest of August 1946 and accelerated the final days of the Stalinist government. The latter in any case could not survive long after it was over from above, because it was impossible to maintain for long the movement of workers in alliance with the Stalinists, who had no real will or subordinating it to demands imposed from above.

From August 1946 the crisis of the Stalinist regime never took the form of an explosion of worker discontent, as would be Party tried to give control. There was then an escalation of managers of the most unpopular enterprises. Their omnipotence had its objective foundation in the abuse of power made by these managers (involving working conditions, wages and rents) but also the material advantages that managers had obtained for themselves or which had created their own little circles, friends and personal clique).

One example of the state of worker discontent is given by what happened after the arrest of a depot manager of the Timber Trust, Western Region (in Yaroslavl Region). He was arrested at first as a "counter-revolutionary". However, he made a full admission to the oppositional role of his past; seemed to be the center of the affair. He was accused of having tried to bring back the "black service" of movement by blackguards, the road from consideration of having received orders from the western regions. Disorganized majority of timber workers began to disorganized majority of timber workers without justification etc. - some days after the publication of these accusations in the press, Lenin district committee organized a general meeting of the workers and employees of the depot. This meeting adopted a resolution condemning the appearance in court of his betrayer and his accomplices and his condemnation to death by shooting. This resolution was printed in the press. The official report of the meeting testified to the hatred of the workers toward the betrayer and administration of the depot and "red". The workers

were exacerbated by arbitrary wage reductions and poor work organization (which they regarded as discriminatory), and intended to reduce their pay per hour. They were equally discontented with piece rates at work, the living standards of their families and so on. All this was channelled on the lower cadres and, in these circumstances, was utilized by the upper officials against the technical and industrial cadres with whom they were in conflict.¹

Cases of this kind multiplied up to the fact. They testify to the ease with which certain leaders of local Party organizations could mobilize worker discontent against other members belonging to the economic departments. They also show that there were numerous escape routes open to higher bodies and organs of the central administration in their posts. On the whole, the central press took little part in these campaigns. No doubt it then seemed dangerous to expose the workers discontent in that way. In October 1936 there was an improvement of the situation campaign based on the same reason of discontent.

In fact the crisis of the Stalinist dictatorship which began in 1936 made evident the bankruptcy of the existing social and political system which since the time of collective industrialization a potential whose role had been demonstrated by the early Stalinist regime. The aspect of the last fifteen years was a blind struggle to cover the bankruptcy whose cause was not often clear, whose effects were blunted or acts of sabotage.

In any case nothing proved more clearly than the bankruptcy of the regime after its first creation in 1928. It had been less and less capable of responding to the hopes that the Party leadership had placed in it. For example, the industrial plan of 1932's prices were increased in 1933. This to the extent of 18 percent. In movement rates were even lower: for coal 11 percent, petroleum 10 percent, and sheet metal 10 percent, while the rate of growth for agriculture products was falling (11.1 percent in 1931 and 12 percent in 1938 against 28 percent in 1930).

(e) The reproduction on a larger scale of differences between unskilled and skilled workers

In Part One & Volume Two of *Capital*, Marx does not refer to mechanization and large-scale industry, but observes that

in the capitalist system of the machine, it is the whole system of machines what he terms the 'automation', which is the subject while the workers are simply auxiliary components helping its unconscious organs and like them subordinate to the social control power. To this relationship of workers with the machine, which signifies the subordination of live labor to dead labor, Marx opposes that in which 'the collective worker is the body of social labor appears as the dominical subject and the mechanical automation as its object'.

Marx remarks that the capitalist system of the machine transforms the forms of division of labor among the workers. It brings about a new social division between the main workers and the assistants. It divides workers into those who work with mechanical tools and the laborers. It generates more qualified personnel—engineers, mechanics, experts etc., who supervise the general mechanism and make the necessary repairs.

Marx also observes that the bourgeois universities bring in their post-teaching schools while it reserves of the professional only the shadow of vocational training. He further adds that with the conquest of power by the working class there will be introduced the teaching of technologies, practical and theoretical in the people's schools.¹⁷ A teaching needed to break up the accumulation of knowledge technical and scientific at one side of society which serves the interests of a small oligarchy of the direct producers to servitude.

The character of the capitalist revolution of October did not prevent in its aftermath, attempts being made to struggle against the capitalist characteristics of the educational system. The Bolshevik Party, in fact wanted to be the instrument of proletarian revolution and was thereon bent to create a technical school of work and the workers factories. Relying on similarly it decided on the creation of factory committees.

However the continuation of the war compelled the organization of industrial resistance to the tsarist regime carried on by the old regime. Therefore, after and the end of the established development of productive forces (which the Bolshevik Party did not yet manage with success) and in resulting to the scope of the decisions taken in the manifesto of October for example the Relyaks who were given charge to be liable to politics, education and teach a variety of industrial

which aspect, moved little by little toward the training of specialists, who constituted a sort of "worker elite," and engineers of proletarian origin.

Throughout the 1920s two tendencies were still in confrontation. One of them emphasized mass polytechnic training and a single-stream approach (this tendency was often to be found within the Komintern), the other insisted on rapid specialization and the setting up of distinct training streams.²³ This second tendency was supported by enterprise managers and certain trade-unionists.

At the end of NFP when the capitalist revolution was deepening, the second tendency was more and more strengthened. Priority was given to the training of narrowly specialized workers. The conceptions of the Central Institute of Labor thus prevailed both in the organs of centralized professional training connected with this Institute and in the trade schools, themselves authorized to provide a rapid "training" of a limited six-month term. This training was distinct from that given in the course of the "normal" previous two or three year cycle. Training on the job then became very important.²⁴

Partisans of this orientation looked, in justification, at cheaper "cost" and greater "profitability," and they were believed. Thus there was consolidated a division between two "training streams." On one produced workers who were narrowly specialized and subject to the short term demands of production. The other trained a "worker elite" destined to enjoy much higher wages than those of the mass of the workers. This streaming contributed to the development of a "qualification" polarization.

The "short stream" insisted on "drills" necessary for very specialized activity. It was a matter of adapting future workers to work that was parceled into small blocks. Apprentices were shown how to do physical exercises.²⁵ Formerly this stream also included scientific and technical instruction (leading to a so-called "technical minimum" diploma) but the content of this instruction was increasingly specialized. Thus the decree of September 15, 1933²⁶ reduced to six months the duration of courses in the factory schools and theoretical instruction to 20 percent. In addition, the latter had to be directly relevant to the specialization. In these circumstances, only specialized workers

would be trained not skilled workers and there could not longer be any question of a polytechnical training. The latter henceforth was criticised for producing 'intellectuals rather than manual workers'.²⁴⁷ Its contents reduced the technically trained no longer prepared the way for entry into another training stream.

During the First Five Year Plan the trade schools of two or three years also trained a large number of skilled workers mainly recruited from old workers and the sons of skilled workers.²⁴⁸ Later skilled workers were increasingly trained in technical schools which drew their pupils from secondary and primary education. The same thing happened with the peasants' schools and the institutes of higher education which became 'theoretical'. Henceforward the principle of a single stream was abandoned. The separation between the training and situation of skilled workers on the one hand and the mass of workers on the other became ever greater.

At the end of the 1930s the division of the working class was accentuated. The bulk of the industrial working personnel consisted of labourers and specialized workers who had received a really minimal training. A minority consisted of skilled workers whose living conditions differed greatly from those of the mass of workers. Movement from one category to the other was increasingly difficult despite the existence of a network of relatively large evening schools. In effect the recruitment of skilled workers was mainly from the secondary schools. As well, the living and working conditions of the mass of workers deteriorated in pursuit of an急于 to sustain and successful participation in the evening schools. Consequently, the polarization of the working class was consolidated.

II Forms of worker consciousness

Obviously an analysis of the forms of workers' consciousness must be very important for grasping certain of the ideological actions of the masses and debates suffered by the workers at the dissolution of all organisations they could call their own. However a true analysis of these forms of consciousness is for many reasons extremely difficult - perhaps even impossible.

In fact, the possibility left to the workers to express themselves and even to act outside the control of the authorities was reduced to a minimum by a brutal repression based on the near-constant presence of the police.¹⁴⁷ On the other hand, the very conditions under which workers lived, the diversity of their origins, the conflicting relationships they had with official ideology (which did not succeed in functioning as a true communist ideology),¹⁴⁸ contributed to a real explosion of the forms of consciousness while hindering a clear understanding of them. Consequently what is said about the forms of worker consciousness can only be fragmentary.

(1) Worker Party-members

Firstly, here are some figures for the evolution of the worker Party-members. These figures show that two clear periods must be distinguished from each other firstly 1928-32, then the period from 1932 to the war.

During the first period the number of workers who were Party members grew strongly, from 672,000 in 1928 to more than 1.5 million in 1932 (end of December).¹⁴⁹ This growth was faster than that of the total workers. It corresponds to a systematic policy of the Party leadership that sought to increase the proportion of cadres of worker origin, regarding the latter as more "reliable." The scope of this increase of the worker Party-members can only be appreciated if account is taken of both the policy that the Party was putting into operation (and it is known that this manifested itself by anti-worker offensives that deeply lowered the working and living conditions of the workers); and of the motivations and a majority of the workers who then belonged to the Party.

The greater part of the information that is available about the worker recruits of the Party at the beginning of the 1930s and this information comes as much from the Soviet press, which took up the complaints and requests of simple workers,¹⁵⁰ from the descriptions originating from workers and especially foreigners who worked in the USSR at this period, suggests that the recent worker-members of the Party were increasingly included, as soon as they had received a promotion to collective

themselves above ordinary workers and to assert themselves as an élite with a right to a certain number of privileges.¹²³ The rift between ordinary workers and Party members of workers or not because of this tended to deepen. This tendency was all the stronger in that the scale of the industrialization program and collectivization and the development of the tasks of management, administration and organization that this program implied impelled the Party leadership to transform rapidly a large proportion of its new worker recruits into officials and administrators.

The behaviour of new Party members of working class origin promoted to responsible posts (but also that of older Party members) was a source of real tension between the population and numerous cadres. These tensions impelled the Party leadership to launch the purges of 1933 and 1934. These purges were accompanied by press campaigns from which it seems that most of those expelled in these years were accused of being careerists, 'bureaucratic elements seeking personal advantage,' 'morally corrupt,' 'passive' and so on.¹²⁴ Without taking all these charges at face value, one can still acknowledge that they roughly reflect reality.¹²⁵

Among the direct testimony that is available about the new adherents and sympathizers of the Party at the beginning of the 1930s is that of Gligo. The general tone of his writing (and he conveys his thoughts in a simple, lucid style) make it hard to doubt the authenticity of this account.

In his book, published for the first time in 1964 and republished twice since,¹²⁶ this old member of the Leningrad Politburo tells of his experience with the young militants of Leningrad whom up to May 1930 he was charged with instructing. This instruction was given to three categories of young militiamen usually originating from the ranks of the workers:

A first category was that of students of the Leningrad University. Gligo writes that at first they seemed to form to some way the Leningrad proletarian élite. They were 25-30 years old and he describes them as 'healthy and energetic' adding: 'They were mostly old working men and had long careers of public activity behind them.'¹²⁷ He emphasizes their capacity to learn but notes at the same time what might be termed an attitude of passive scholars: '...they certainly

learned very well they were taught they learned it by heart for them what was not written in the manual did not exist. They were limited to the official program and showed no "critical sense."

When Ciliga spoke to them about the role of the free action of the masses" they remained indifferent. In their eyes it was the part of leaders to make decisions. On the material level they showed real pity before a period of rigorous shortages during which worker families were short of bread, meat and butter but their privileges and the sufferings of the workers did not seem to embarrass them. When one spoke to them about it they replied with generalities like "the building up of socialism is not without its difficulties. This is the only knowing them better. Ciliga no longer regards them as a "workers' state" but as partners situated above all to defend their privileges.²⁵⁵

About the second category of these students those of the People's Party school Ciliga does not say very much. He indicates that they were young communists from the provinces usually of peasant origin. They acknowledged the contradictions in which they found themselves, adhering to the political line of the Party but sharing the peasants' uneasiness. "In these confused story aspects it was the first which triumphed for these militants who were ready to be nothing more than low-level executives of a line determined by others."

The last group of Ciliga's students comprised factory communist militants members of the agitation and propaganda departments of enterprise cells in brigades or sections of these cells. Nearly all were or had been workers. A few already occupied minor official positions. There was not fitting with these manual labor "had unpaid debts and were candidates for official positions. This was one of the reasons by which the politically active left the ranks of the workers' enter official careers.

Ciliga indicates that the living conditions maintained these pupils (who followed courses of three to six months) were excellent and privileged compared to workers who remained in the factories. All the same unlike the pupils of the other categories they remained close to the practicalities of the worker classes they would speak about them while around

the common place explanations. They did not hesitate to declare: "The workers' life is unbearable. Our pattern is at an end. Our propaganda meets with great obstacles among the workers. I will be the other students. There also showed a great interest in the revolutionary worker movements of other countries. In which they still placed a good deal of hope."²³

Through these several utterances can be seen the outline of several new types of new cadre and Party members. Some already gripped by anxieties about their own careers, others anxious about the situation of the workers but relatively passive, and the last category closer to the working masses, whose discontent and hopes they expressed while partly turning toward the international revolutionary movement.

The scale of the 1933-34 purges²⁴ suggests that the mass entry of these types of cadre originating in the factories did not help Party activity among the workers of factories and construction sites.

For the period which begins after 1912 there is less information about the Party's worker recruitment. Nevertheless, it is known that in 1935-40 it provided less than 20 percent of new members.²⁵ In 1939 it would seem that workers formed only about 10 percent of the membership. They numbered about 200,000 a decrease of more than 10 percent since 1912. Even more important was that a percentage of Party worker members represented no more than the equivalent of 3.6 percent of the total factory and construction workers against 19 percent in 1918 and 14.6 percent in 1917.²⁶

These figures demonstrate the depth of the rift separating the Party from the working masses. They confirm that the Party's official dogma, exculpatory and triumphalist, was foreign to the forms of consciousness of the working masses.

(2) The non-Party workers

While it is difficult to comprehend the forms of consciousness, motivations and aspirations of worker Party-members, it is even more difficult to investigate the same topics in relation to the non-Party members. In fact the open expression of the latter's feelings were strongly suppressed, while on the other hand these feelings were extremely mixed and contradictory.

The bits of knowledge that we have suggest that there co-existed within these masses deep discontent (to which we shall allude later) and a kind of mass adherence to the existing order. Most often, this discontent was not aimed at the regime but at what were regarded as the 'abuses' and shortcomings of its operations, abuses and shortcomings which were regarded as remediable.

Among the pieces of knowledge available a special place may be granted to an investigation carried out between September 1950 and September 1951 among several thousand Soviet refugees in West Germany and the United States.⁴³ (The conclusions of this do not seem to conform to what those who financed this project would have wished to reveal — in fact one of the conclusions the authors of this enquiry arrived at was that the majority of workers accepted the existing social and economic situation. The authors observe that the workers who were interviewed did not usually question what is termed "the institutional aspects of the Soviet system, such as government ownership of industry."⁴⁴ They also note

The Soviet worker appears to take the Soviet factory and its special form of organization for granted and as the natural way of doing things. He is unhappy about the low pay, he wants the harsh labor laws eased or eliminated, he would like the pace eased and would be happy to have better materials to work with but he questions hardly a single major aspect of the general organization of the Soviet factory system.⁴⁵

However this 'acceptance' of the existing order was combined with discontent whose causes went far beyond those referred to in the above quotation. There were many reasons for discontent.

In the first place, it is known that at the end of the war about two thirds of the Soviet workers were new arrivals' snatched from the village by the brutal methods of collectivization and the claimed dekulakization. The majority of these workers were placed in a miserable state in consequence of Party policy and their situation was

painful than the one they had known previously especially from the point of view of accommodation, food, and wages came on a hierarchy. This was extremely important. Even if it was lived through by some as though it were some kind of natural catastrophe it nevertheless provoked a discontent much deeper than that caused by one or another particular "abuse."

At the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s the denunciation of large masses apparently gave rise to a rebirth of religious practices. This rebirth was felt by the Party as a manifestation of opposition and was repressed as such. This happened above all in the smaller towns at the beginning of the First Five-Year Plan. For example, in May 1929 an OGPU report noted that whilst the workers of a locality near Smolensk were largely absent from May 1 holiday celebrations they openly participated in large numbers at the religious ceremonies accompanying Easter. This report quotes the words of a young worker who declared:

The Bolsheviks spite the workers, so the workers spite the Bolsheviks. Take their May Day holiday. The little children came out to hear the music, but all the workers stayed at home. But on their own Easter holiday they all went to church. The Bolsheviks do evil to the workers, so the workers do them evil.²⁴⁴

In the following years this sort of oppositional manifestation seems to have been less frequent. Religious practices then no longer appeared as a challenge. Rather they were a sign of allegiance to an ideology other than that of the Party, an ideology in which part of the workers sought to "forget" the difficulties of daily life. It is not possible to evaluate the degree of influence of religious ideas within the working class. In any case it seemed sufficiently worrying to the authorities to persuade the latter to launch several anti-religious campaigns, notably in 1936.²⁴⁵ Conversely, at the time of the war the influence of religion (which actually was stronger among peasants than workers) seemed so strong that the Party seemed to attack it and contrived non-hostile relations with part of the clergy.

Thus the circumstances in which the large workers' families were formed weighed heavily on their forms of entry into society, all the more durably because the "new proletariat" were most often the ones who had the most difficult life situations; they received the lowest wages because, having no qualifications, they provided the great majority of labourers. They were the most poorly housed, most often in barracks and barracks-like surroundings; they were immersed in work surroundings where physical coercion held sway, and which had nothing in common with the surroundings they had known previously.

In fact the difference of origin (town or country and town) and the differences of remuneration converged and mutually reinforced each other, marking out various cleavages within the working masses. The enquiry by R.A. Bauer and his associate K. G. Kostylev quoted confirms the depth of one of these cleavages. The authors of this investigation write, for example:

It is important to recognise that the Soviet policy of marked differentials in pay and other rewards according to skill and productivity has apparently succeeded in introducing marked distinctions within the working class. The segment of the working class which separates itself under the self-designation "skilled worker" is much more satisfied with its job experience in general, and with its pay in particular, than is the rank-and-file worker group.²²⁸

These same authors specify that from certain points of view the skilled workers were closer to the non-manual workers than they were to the other workers (labourers and peasants) although they identified themselves as belonging to the working class. They also note that their relationships with other workers seemed to be tarnished by antagonisms, especially when they served as an instrument for the revision of norms.²²⁹

However, what was most characteristic of the forms of consciousness of the working masses was the way in which the labourers and over-qualified workers (who represented the great majority of the mining and construction industry) endured their implementation in production. The available information

shows a clear consciousness indicating the existence of a critical attitude on the part of the factory attitude not toward the system which it has been born into "excepted from abstraction" but to its concrete operation. These convictions were to be found as well at the level of individual or collective attitudes as at the level of verbal expression.

Most accounts of behavior which revealed a critical attitude toward the operation of the system have already been mentioned. To summarize they were conscious to some degree of differences between their own system and it has been seen how the authorities reacted to these attitudes, and how they strive to discipline the workers by developing a common system of norms and procedures in industry.

It should be added that the authorities used another means to force the workers to submit to the inevitable discipline that was required. This means was alcoholism. It is a fact that millions of workers diverted their interests in drink. It is also a fact that alcoholism often leads people to worse attributable the state if the workers were more short of alcohol. The effects of this alcoholism were disastrous from the point of view of health and also of production but nothing was done (and this is an understatement) to combat it because it constituted a political measure of showing the workers to increase their social and political passivity. It was the opinion of the Soviet people.

To the measure of alcohol consumption was not enough to reflect various expressions of radical and deep discontent. These expressions relatively rare because of the severity of repression and police being largely manifested themselves as voluntary and involuntary work stoppages and other dear deprivations. Because of long-term imprisonment little is known about these workers' freedom but it is known that they broke out from time to time groups that may be called "conferences" by means of the creation of stable workers' organizations. These struggles were to be made in the industries in which wages were lowest (the textile industry) or in towns that were especially badly supplied with food. During the First Five Year Plan it is known for example that there were strikes, demonstrations and hunger marches in various textile factories in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, Kostroma and elsewhere and that these workers' struggles gave rise to severe repression.¹⁰

The unfolding of the repression and the way in which the workers reacted are very significant. In general the authorities began by isolating the most radical demands (to dismiss the management and ensure a return to work). Then they arrested over three workers and sent ten or twenty to camps. Later, following months of arrests of workers convicted under various pretexts (usually for individual crimes) so much so that thousands of workers were deported in the end. This document provides information about these struggles and the repression that they provoked, also notes about the participants in the struggle that in no way feel they put themselves up as harbingers of a political cause less still as advocates of the regime. They took part for concrete and specific reasons and once sentenced they wished above all to return to work, to find work and earn their release.²⁷ These workers do not therefore appear to be opponents of the regime.

The complexity of the forms of consciousness of the workers also appeared as noted above at the level of verbal expression, but the latter could not be known until later and the particular circumstances which occurred especially in the second half of the 1930s. Then the Party leadership decided to make room for the expression of workers' views while taking care to see that it was directed towards a lower level because in industry as more specifically in the U.S. Following decisions taken after 1935 numerous documents flooded the newspapers and certain official departments, notably those of the judiciary from 1946 to 1948.

A perusal of newspapers of the time and the extent to which access is possible (in practice this cannot exceed the Smithsonian Archives now in the United States) can give a certain view to be taken of the picture made of the situation in the different sectors strata (the judgments that they had of it and the changes they wished to make in it). Nevertheless information obtained in this way is necessarily incomplete. First, it was very commonly what complained to add 'nothing to the authorities' secondly those who did complain apparently censored the expression of their discontent. One previous experience had shown that executives of the companies would refer back to the heads of their staffs with the authority declaring. These complaints are from 1947

In these circumstances what was condemned or
what from the population, corresponded alone to that and
otherwise in what was condemnable by others there
was little to these complaints of their nature of the complaints
coming from the public in the very initiative.

It now takes to begin with the sources of complaints in the
material. At first it would appear that the author of the other
complaints above all the others which were being pre-
pared in the workers' and sailors' system of it was not that
these stories to them seemed to come entirely from
the character or qualities of the system's operation, from the
social relationships and positions that were objectively dominant
but from subjective personal characteristics of one or another
agent of the system. Thus the workers who wrote these others
named themselves in vulnerable situations to be connected
with them and to be often indifference. They
named or defamed officials who were exercising their
aggressive functions and who were not far from administrative
and business brutality behaving like potentates or great
lords corruption, etc.¹⁷ As Kilkishev remarks, some
of these were written in the "fable style". Their authors even
though used the arguments used by the press and official
spokesmen. They affected proclaimed principles in order to
justify against their informants. In the whole they did
not put it to explicit question the manner and the amount
of the principles by which wages and norms were fixed. The
type of letter did not usually, except the way the managers
condemned were appointed on the one hand or
that they were chosen. Their authors complained
concerning to wages the were too low, managers who were
brutal or corrupt, etc.

The perusal of such complaints obviously does not tell us
whether or to the expressing them you can be considered to be
concerning mainly those acts which will at once be
condemned as condemnative and whether the author of
them sent to the authorities officially because they had
no right to make about facts that were isolated or partly
but even though the same acts were reported through
the channel. The almost total absence of complaints concerning
the immediate situation while registration is developing on

a large scale invites the thought that here there was an extreme prudence toward the authorities. Those who addressed themselves to them did so in despair in face of a situation felt to be intolerable.

The style of these complaints therefore reflected more distrust than confidence toward the Party organizations, press, or mass meetings which were meant to take notice of them. This appeared when the authors of these complaints threatened to carry them—if a favorable outcome failed to appear—to a higher level (to appeal in Moscow or to Stalin).²⁷⁴ However such a threat suggests that the authors of these complaints had perhaps a little faith in the higher levels. This faith—if it was genuine and it seems that part of it was—was nurtured by the repression that the higher leadership was exercising at this time against the local and intermediate cadres. The latter were often hated, and the repression that struck them was felt to conform to popular sentiment.

Fear of being punished for making a complaint impelled some writers of letters to refer to a much wider discontent which they said was felt by workers who did not dare to protest by letter. These writers held the authorities themselves to blame. For example, the authors of a letter denouncing the behavior (described as stupid) of certain managers declared:

We are writing because all the ignorant and consciousnessless workers are slandering the authorities because of such idiots.²⁷⁵

This suggests the existence of a discontent much more radical than that personally expressed by the authors of the letters.

The discussion campaign mounted in 1936 around the project of the new Constitution (which was adopted at the end of the year) was also an opportunity for a certain number of workers to express their point of view and their criticisms. But information about the criticisms expressed in the framework of these discussions is relatively rare. However, it does suggest that at times the discussion was carried further than the authorities wished. For example, while certain officials were blamed for having reduced the discussion to a mere 'formality' others were attacked for 'not having been able to lead the criticism'

which meant that given time were in and return due was granted, it was favorable to the authorities.²²

The Municipal Archives reveal some of the things said over at the meeting of the authorities. Among their figures mention is made in later reports on the example workers wanted to see at the Constitution the slogan of employers managers to respect this legislation. Suggestions were also made with a view to a more strict regulation concerning the miners work safety and the extension of free medical services. Workers demanded a better guarantee of their personal safety if a change in the way officials and especially miners were appointed. Some demanded that officials should be elected and some workers suggested that inspection of mines should be legalized.²³ All this indicates the existence of an ideology quite different from the official ideology.

The situation of transition matters is evidence of a very close after the ideological differentiations existing between workers and others the discussions which resulted from this. However we know that discussions took place and that points were that differed from the official point of view succeeded in getting themselves expressed. We also have that when these differing points of view obtained sufficient support they did not ones get mentioned in the press.²⁴ Nevertheless the active participants in the discussions were a minority, the majority of workers staying silent participating in the discussion while when meetings were organized at which discussion was practically unavoidable.

In sum everything indicates that there were substantial differences between workers and others. These tensions could be very acute with the utilitarian and triumphalistic discourse of the authorities but the latter had steadily and consistently with the great difficulties in which the public was finding itself. These kinds of shattered worker consciousness favored the type of passive acceptance of the situation but did not break the expression of much resistance. It is even the case that over time by local demonstration of discontent these conflicts constituted, at the time to prove it this event did it taken as a kind of explosive fuel.

The first period is especially in the second half of the 1930s was the activity of the authorities to themselves talk

about the situation and denounce the circumstances that especially exacerbated the workers' hence the numerous interventions by Stalin, pillorying the "bureaucracy," the attitudes of "great lords" and of certain managers and the scandalous attitude towards people, cadres, and workers."¹⁴

Such words obscured the role played by the authorities themselves in the consolidation of a system that multiplied their privileges and the arrogance of an exploiting managing minority. However, through the denunciation which it included, this discourse sounded in the ears of the workers like an echo of their own complaints. It contributed above all when repression fell on part of the cadres—in developing a populist feeling with a certain faith in the power summit from which this discourse came. Thus there coexisted in the worker consciousness an absence of adhesion to the official ideology, a manifest discontent with the functioning of the system together with a "faith of the populist type in the top leadership of the Party."

The second element which prevented accumulated discontent taking an explosive form was the scale itself of the repression. The latter succeeded in dismantling any attempt at organized resistance. It gave rise to prudence, fear and the passive acceptance of things as they were. Above all since it generated a vast sector of penal work; it made those who were not subjected to that kind of work feel that they were "privileged."

Notes

- 1 These figures are from *NKh* 1970g, p. 509. They have been rounded upwards from those which were in the statistical collections published before the 1962 publication of the 1959 census results which also record the 1959 census results. See *Komp'yuternye pererabotki nauchnykh issledovaniy SSSR* (Moscow 1962). I mention this revision because of its nature and the conclusions that can be drawn as to the dimensions of nonpaid labor (which of course in part may—or may not—be reflected in the statistics about wage-earners in the Soviet economy). To illustrate the importance of the statistical revisions, I would mention that in the 1956 year book the same wage-earning population is estimated at 31.2 million (cf. *NKh* 1956g, p. 203) which corresponds to the figures obtained on the

- most formal reports from various organizations that were engaged in project 1. The total station left at the end of August without those employed.

1. *Investigation from N.K.V.D. 1939*, p. 700.

2. One of the few documents I have is the part of the report on the workers' strike at the plant of the Ministry of Communications in Moscow during 1937. The original document has been lost, but part of the report on the strike is attached to the original document which had been given to me. I do not know but these other materials are also in the station of wages and in working it may be what is known about the transportation and the wages were reflected which appears in prior to 1937 to the free workers there will be discussed later.

3. *Workers in the Flotilla* (see note 1) p. 106. A later Report on the state of labor in Soviet Russia is contained in *Report to a Congress* (Evanston 1953), p. 110; and Lantner, p. 100.

4. Estimated from *N.K.V.D. 1970g*, p. 509.

5. One of the first signs of the economic difficulties was the adoption of the eight-hour day working day which coincided with the entry of a general strike against the capitalist classes especially against agriculture by the workers (see 1. Note). *Approximation du travail dans le secteur non agricole en URSS* (1944 & 1945). Thesis 1949. In *Review of the Soviet Studies on Scientific Sociology*, p. 236.

6. Another phenomenon was of such large scale that on average each worker averaged only one hour eight months from 1937. Letter of 1937, giving the Soviet Statistical Year Book for 1937.

7. *Workers Report* and the 1938 also *Workers Workers* Vol. 12, p. 100, 101, 102, 103, 104 and 105. Software between these years was very small and systematically counted the hours of the time and were frequently agreed in this peasant work (see also K.P. B. o post rozhdeniya (Moscow, 1938), pp. 60 ff).

8. See 1. Note 3. *Workers Workers* Vol. 10, 11 and 12, 13, pp. 107 and 312-13.

9. *Investigation*, Jan 15, 1939.

10. *Investigation* (see 1. Note 3) p. 103.

11. According to the report of the 1938 employed in industry and transport the older bank has been converted from October 1937 of 1938. By a decree of Dec. 20, 1938 this older bank has been again named *Bank of the workers* (see note 10-10.0).

12. *Investigation*, Dec. 20, 1938.

13. These wages were paid weekly after the war. In a document August 9, 1938 see 1. Note 3 p. 316) which shows that from 1938 and thereafter a weekly wage is the circumstance of the 1938.

14. A decree of Dec. 20, 1937 had introduced the eight-hour day and demand of the Russian Social Democratic Party see 1. Note 3 p. 101. In 1937 together with the introduction of a law with the seven-hour day the banks converted from 10 to 8 hours which is equivalent of the four days work. These days were paid one day of rest of the working week.

- the only day allowed at that enterprise and that it would work 10 hours a day. In 1941 returning to the seven-day week, the factory made a further amendment, the last being fixed. It was a question of increasing working hours without accompanying wage increases and was a very long time until the 9.6 hours were reached in 1944. See *Uzbek SSR* (Dec. 20, 1942).
16. Directive no. 2* 348 in A. Bergman, *The Structure of Soviet Wages* (London: Macmillan, 1954), pp. 2-5. It shows an English translation of wage estimates from the decree of June 26, 1940 and uses from that of July 20, 1940 to be mentioned in the next section.
 17. This right was recognized by Article 46 of the *Law on Collective Farm Land* adopted at the KVFSSR Moscow, 9...
 18. See Schwarz, pp. 104-107.
 19. Article 10 of Decree on the Right of the Peasants to a *Voluntary Association* of Oct. and Dec. 1940.
 20. *Soviet Union's Statistics No. 7*, 8 (1940) p. 3 and *Report to August 11* 1940.
 21. See A. Nove, *An Economic History*, pp. 260ff.
 22. Schwarz, p. 119-30.
 23. See especially *Directive Dec. 2* 441* and *Decree on Working hours* Moscow March 5, 1942 (Art. 10, 1942 and Sept. 23, 1941).
 24. Schwarz, p. 118.
 25. For example, a decision of Narkomtrud of the USSR dated Jan. 15, 1931 or of Narkomtrud of the RSFSR dated Jan. 1, 1931; *Directive Law* 8 1931 and *Instructions Narkomtruda*, pp. 137-40.
 26. In any case either the management of an enterprise could designate workers for such service on a permanent basis because it was necessary to reduce the work of one person of active labor force and not to allow another, upon a reasonable period, might be paid. See Schwarz and *Industrial Relations in Russia*, Moscow 1956, pp. 99 and 103 and P. M. Stoyanov, *Industrial Moscow*, pp. 18-19. In principle, the agreement of the trade unions and enterprise organizations was required in the 1930s situation and agreement was almost always granted.
 27. The business of the *zavodsovet* is as they mainly handled it. *Trade Unions' Directive June 24, 1940* (and Spanish).
 28. See above previous section and *Directive Oct. 20, 1940*.
 29. R. Conquest, *Industrial Workers*, p. 31.
 30. Let us note that these enterprises fell into disuse late after the war. They were formally established only in 1946. R. Conquest, *Industrial Workers*, p. 31.
 31. See *Directive Narkomtrada* 1939 p. 201* and Schwarz p. 22.
 32. See *Directive Law* 3 1940 and *Report Internationale du Comité URSS* 1940.
 33. The decree of July 2 stipulated that only those students and pupils who had an excellent relation would qualify for a study grant. There is a text in English of this decree in A. Bergman, *The Structure of Soviet Wages* pp. 234ff. In 1940 the grants varied from 150 to 300 rubles per year for a family and from 300-350 for apprentices. At that time the average monthly wage of a first category worker the lowest paid was

named 1100 robes. It should be mentioned that after the death of Gaddafi he still grants state subsidies. In 1986 (it is not clear if this was generally) were the children of a few as members of the new government. Cf. *Armed Neutrality Policy and Soviet Politics* (Cambridge, Mass.), 1986, p. 230, note 14.

54. We should however keep in mind that the industrial workers party
of the working-class revolutionaries (Workers' Party) Moscow 1914
p. 11 quoted by A. Aronov. *Managerial Power* p. 247-48

55. Marx remarks that the direction of the production process can never
be more despotic when it has a capitalist nature. Marx *Le Capital*
Editions Sociales edition Vol. 2 p. 241 He also notes that the more
in one's other form grows the more the function of control is
extensively exercised from officer corps. *Capital* p. 24 He adds
this direction that has been imposed would become superfluous
social system where the workers work for themselves. *Ibid.* p.
202

56. *Spravochnik po sotsialno-ekonomicheskym rabochim*, Moscow 1907. This edition
is in form see T. Low II. *La traduction de l'ouvrage dans le
langage portugais*. In *Bulletin du travail* Nr. 2 1911 pp. 1-2
Part 2 of the order of Feb. 25 1932 *spravochnik po sotsialno-ekonomicheskym*
In these and following documents see Schwartz pp. 2-38

57. Among others see AP April 24 1930, and Feb 25 1931, April
1931 Nov 7 1931 and then throughout the 1930s (Schwarz pp. 2-38)

58. *Investigacão*, Nov 7 1931

59. Trud March 21 and 29 May 11, 1934

60. Trud, May 16, 1937

61. Schwarz, pp. 288ff

62. Articles quoted by Schwarz, pp. 292-93

63. See the official records of the USSR (Note 10 Chapter 1 Part 1
volume),

64. We shall return to this question in Part 3

65. See Schwarz pp. 293-295 This article shows that the Vrabchik
was made incapable of performing its duties

66. In Marx *Le Capital* (Editions Sociales edition) Vol. 2 p. 247
Contingency of decisions could also be situated in these
units. It was here a matter of the penal colony workers rather than
of the labor camps

67. Schwarz p. 99 and I (cf. Russian Marxist Analysis Unit)

68. See *Narodnoye zdatstvo i sotsialnoe rukovodstvo* which he translated as
SdSR No. 244 1933

69. *Wirtschaftliche struktur des Moskow 1930* p. 5

70. Schwarz p. 106 It will be noted that the first figure indicates an
average by the Soviet press was not exceptionally high at all when
compared with other countries.

71. *Investigacão*, Dec. 29, 1938

72. *Investigacão*, Jan. 9, 1939

73. See *Estatística soviética* No. 1 1919 and *Pravda* dat. 26 1919

74. Schwarz, p. 103.

75. Trud, Feb. 3 5 10, 1939 quoted by Schwarz, p. 104

76. *Investigacão* July 27 1940

77. *Narodnoye zdatstvo* No. 1440 pp. 24-30 and *In* *Ibid.*
Schwarz, p. 308.

- 81 See *Sovetskaya yustitsiya*, No. 13, 1940, pp. 8-10, quoted by Schwarz, p. 13.
- 82 K. Long, *Real Industrial Workers*, pp. 105-07.
- 83 *Iszvestia* Dec. 30, 1946, quoted by I. J. H. Russia, p. 27.
- 84 See Vol. 1, p. 183-185 of the present work.
- 85 See above, pp. 391-92 and V. Lenin, *Collected Works* (Moscow 1945), Vol. 32, p. 24.
- 86 See above, Vol. 32, p. 98.
- 87 See above, Vol. 33, p. 187.
- 88 Vol. 2 pp. 172-73 of the present work. Also KPSS [1953], Vol. 2 pp. 94ff.
- 89 See Vol. 2 pp. 345 and 455 of the present work.
- 90 XVI, 2nd VIKP [b] p. 83. Another English version is given in T. Szamuely's "The Elimination of Opposition between the Sixteenth and the Seventeenth Congress of the CPSU" in *Soviet Studies*, (January 1956), pp. 318 ff. (Quotation on p. 338).
- 91 See KPSS [1953], Vol. 1, pp. 604ff.
- 92 See above, pp. 807 and 818.
- 93 See Vol. 1 of the present work, p. 329.
- 94 KPSS 1953, Vol. 2, p. 608.
- 95 See the article by I. Kessner deputy chairman of VSNKh in *Za Jan. 13* 1931. This paper at this time replaced *Torgovo-przemyslennaya gazeta*.
- 96 *Trud* Feb. 6, 1931 and Schwarz, pp. 240-49 also pp. 516-17 in Schwarz French edition & Schwarz *Les Ouvriers et l'industrie soviétique* (Paris, 1956).
- 97 For example, see *Trud*, April 19 and 27, Sept. 1931.
- 98 *Trud*, April 9 and 12, 1931.
- 99 I. Stalin, Works Vol. 12 (Moscow 1954) pp. 53ff especially pp. 61-62. Stalin in a speech of June 23, 1931 was called "New conditions - new tasks in economic construction."
- 100 *Trud*, August 15 and 18, 1931.
- 101 *Trud*, January 14, 1931.
- 102 *Trud*, February 16, 1931.
- 103 This trade union responsibility was emphasized by Gavril Vinburg, secretary of the Central Council of Presidium in charge of wage matters in May 1932 at a meeting of the Presidium. See *Trud* May 21, 1932.
- 104 See *Mémoires pour le rapport annuel par le Comité central du XXe Congrès communiste* (Moscow 1942) pp. VII-VIII quoted by Schwarz p. 493 of the French edition of his book.
- 105 The Ninth Congress still included 64.4 percent of delegates regarded as workers. At the Tenth Congress the latter constituted only 23.5 percent, while 40 percent were union officials and 9.4 percent technicians (See Deutscher Soviet Trade Unions, [London 1950] pp. 178-29).
- 106 As is known, the same situation as I prevails today in the USSR as in the Soviet bloc countries and also in other "socialist" countries. The only exception is Poland where the workers' struggles enabled the workers to again form a union organization that would not be simply an instrument used by the exploiting class and its power.

107. *Trud*, January 24, 1931.
108. *Trud*, April 8, 1931.
109. *Sovietische Dokumente i rozhvaniye rebotch-kommunisticheskogo pravleniya SSSR* (Moscow 1931), 40/230, vol. 1 and 1934/43/142. See also 832 2nd edition, Vol. 26, p. 161 and KPSS [1954] Vol. III, pp. 230ff.
110. *Trud*, September 1, 6 and 8, 1934, and *Pravda*, September 9, 1934. Also see Schwarz, pp. 413-15 and 417 (cf. the French edition).
111. *Zi*, September 24, 1934.
112. *Pravda*, December 11, 1938.
113. *Trud*, November 23, 1933.
114. On this point see Vol. 2 of the present work, p. 167 note 12. These archives comprise 930 documents of which 327 are numbered WKP 1 or WKP 527 two are numbered 83 923 and 924, and the others are numbered separately.
115. See the archival documents under WKP 353, p. 174 an extract of which is quoted in M. Faizullod Smolensk, p. 416.
116. See WKP 303, p. 142 quoted by M. Faizullod Smolensk, p. 361.
117. See above, pp. 323-24.
118. *Pravda*, March 21, 1937.
119. *Trud*, March 26, 1937.
120. The Plenum was held only once the 1935 Congress, the fifth had met two-and-a-half years previously. However, in 1934 it had been decided that the Plenum would meet every two months (*Pravda*, September 1, 1934).
121. These extracts from Shvernik's speech may be found in Schwarz (French edition), pp. 522-23.
122. This statute was celebrated only in April 1940. It would be ratified at the Tenth Trade Union Congress. It consecrated the concept of tasks that had prevailed since 1930 giving priority to the task of mobilizing the workers for the fulfillment and overall implementation of the plan. In the increase of labor productivity and the reduction of production costs. The other tasks are only mentioned toward the end (see P. Becker, *Collective labour collectives*, pp. 34-35).
123. *Pravda* May 29, 1937 and *Trud*, September 15 and 20, 1937; Schwarz (French edition), pp. 464-65.
124. KPSS [1954], Vol. III, p. 364.
125. See Vol. 2 of the present work, pp. 148-50.
126. *Stalin Works* Vol. 1, Moscow 1964, pp. 78ff.
127. See above, p. 62.
128. See above, p. 64.
129. See above, pp. 77-78.
130. See Note 74, Ch. 2, in Part 3 of this volume.
131. *Stalinoyuz'skaya profssozialisticheskaya sovietnost'* (Moscow 1957), pp. 308 and 406.
132. *1000 Capital* Vol. 1 (Moscow 1974 edition), p. 32.
133. *Stalin. Sochineniya*, Vol. 1 (1954 (standard) 1967), p. 30.
134. This differentiation was part of a policy of dividing the working class according to which we shall recruit and of organizing a working class

- that was relatively privileged. The existence of this latter gave to the power of the dominant class a particular edge, from it permitted the practice of a "workerism" of specific type.
135. The case remains in 1911 and 1912 especially a central one in time L'Assemblée ouvrière à Moscou above p. 142. The author writes that in 1911 construction cost increased by 17 percent whereas the price index is upped a maximum of 15 percent (See his note 1 p. 105)
136. See Pravda May 21, 1931.
137. S. Kaplan, quoted from Schwartz, p. 282.
138. 21 November 7, 1931 quoted from Schwartz p. 282
139. The growth of investment had in fact as consequence the situation that only a relatively small part of it was covered by the profits of investment. Thus in 1913 the profit volume of the state sector rose to 7.8 billion rubles (see Les Finances publiques de l'URSS à 1930 [editions 1931] whereas investment in the same period amounts to 2.7 billion, see L'Entretien. La Planification soviétique p. 400)
140. KPSS [1971], Vol. 5, p. 149.
141. See Tchékhov Adukov in K.P. 1970 p. 21 quoted by C. R. Veltman in his Capitalist elements of management in K.P.S.S. 1970 (ed. Institut of Paris) p. 16. In p. 16 a chapter of industrialisation has been suggested.
142. We shall see later the development and significance of this movement.
143. Maxime Boukharine Vol. 1. Les standards 1926-7 p. 60
144. See above, pp. 83-84
145. See above, p. 94
146. See above p. 8. We shall see later how about the revision of the workers' wage mechanism and how it may lead to the same work intensity.
147. This is developed later in this chapter.
148. See Soviet industrial reorganization documents in Goldsmith, Moscow 1958 p. 10; and A. Karpov. Au-delà du plan. Moscow p. 633.
149. Izvestiya, April 2, 1936
150. A. Yeager. Russia's Industrialization from War to War and Peace, London 1942 also Birovskii in Trud, April 17, 1941
151. Izvestia Moscow, April 10, 1939 quoted by I. Goff. Russia: a Marxist Analysis, p. 24
152. Programmes of production gave way to a more general wage for all categories than the initial one. The main wage standard which went up was re-introduced at a rate half that of the original. For example for a worker who contributed his time the scale corresponding to the 1 percent above wage standard would be paid at 5% from the wage rate. Beyond 5 percent the rate was double and beyond 10 percent it was triple. This principle is repeated from N. A. Karpov. Our industrialisation. Berlin 1951 a translation from a book of the same title in Russian Moscow 1952. This is the result that the programme goes back to a very old concept of wage which permits a regular rise of production costs (pp. 43 and 44).
153. Schwartz p. 147
154. Schwartz, p. 148
155. N. Malov. Der Arbeitsmarkt. p. 27

154. This emerges from the analysis of the work of the Institute of Economics at the University of Bonn, which has been undertaken in collaboration with the Institute of Economic Research and the Institute of Economic Theory of the University of Bonn.
155. Cf. *International Labour Conference, Report of the Conference, 1953*, p. 10.
156. For an example, see above, p. 114.
157. See A. Berger, *The Economics of Social Capital Accumulation* (Berlin, 1954), pp. 207-10.
158. Schwarz, p. 157.
159. H. Meissner, *Der Arbeitnehmer*, p. 29.
160. See above, pp. 36-37.
161. The one theoretical model which seems to have been most successful in this respect is the one developed by the two British economists, John Goss and David C. Pearce, in their article 'The Economics of Social Capital Accumulation' (see note 156). In this article they argue that the growth of the economy depends on the accumulation of capital, but that the growth of capital depends on the accumulation of social capital, i.e. on the growth of the social institutions which are responsible for the creation of social capital. They also argue that the growth of social capital depends on the growth of the economic system, which in turn depends on the growth of the social institutions which are responsible for the creation of social capital. Thus, the growth of social capital depends on the growth of the economic system, which in turn depends on the growth of the social institutions which are responsible for the creation of social capital.
162. It is clear that there is a close relationship between the growth of social capital and the growth of the economic system. However, it is also clear that the growth of social capital is not the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system. There are other factors which also determine the growth of the economic system, such as technological progress, changes in the political system, and so on. Therefore, it is not possible to say that the growth of social capital is the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system. However, it is also true that the growth of social capital is an important factor which contributes to the growth of the economic system.
163. The argument is as follows: if the growth of social capital is the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system, then the growth of social capital must be the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system. This is because if the growth of social capital is the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system, then the growth of social capital must be the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system. This is because if the growth of social capital is the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system, then the growth of social capital must be the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system.
164. It is clear that there is a close relationship between the growth of social capital and the growth of the economic system. However, it is also clear that the growth of social capital is not the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system. There are other factors which also determine the growth of the economic system, such as technological progress, changes in the political system, and so on. Therefore, it is not possible to say that the growth of social capital is the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system. However, it is also true that the growth of social capital is an important factor which contributes to the growth of the economic system.
165. The argument is as follows: if the growth of social capital is the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system, then the growth of social capital must be the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system. This is because if the growth of social capital is the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system, then the growth of social capital must be the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system.
166. The argument is as follows: if the growth of social capital is the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system, then the growth of social capital must be the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system. This is because if the growth of social capital is the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system, then the growth of social capital must be the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system.
167. The argument is as follows: if the growth of social capital is the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system, then the growth of social capital must be the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system. This is because if the growth of social capital is the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system, then the growth of social capital must be the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system.
168. The argument is as follows: if the growth of social capital is the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system, then the growth of social capital must be the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system. This is because if the growth of social capital is the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system, then the growth of social capital must be the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system.
169. The argument is as follows: if the growth of social capital is the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system, then the growth of social capital must be the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system. This is because if the growth of social capital is the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system, then the growth of social capital must be the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system.
170. The argument is as follows: if the growth of social capital is the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system, then the growth of social capital must be the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system. This is because if the growth of social capital is the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system, then the growth of social capital must be the only factor which determines the growth of the economic system.

- 172 According to N.N. Tikhonov in Russlands Bruttoinlandsprodukt unter den Sowjeten (until 1940) the workers' average real wage fell by about 10 percent between 1932 and 1934.
- 173 At the same time as this fall was observed, the prices of products related to the basic needs of the poor (these products were sold above the prices of the same products, not less than 400 rubles coupons) [See Schwartz, p. 162].
- 174 Lenin suggests the figure of 50 percent change in 1921. It may end up with 57% or still higher. See *Lenin's Collected Works*, Moscow 1934, Vol. 1, p. 304.
- 175 Schwarz, p. 169.
- 176 A. Novo. *An Economic History* p. 269.
- 177 See Molotov's report to the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU(b) on the situation in the economy of the Soviet Union in 1938 (*Soviet Economic Interimandise*, April 11, 1938, p. 392).
- 178 * (1924) *Industrialisation* p. 108 and *Industrialisation* p. 112.
- 179 S.N. Prokopovitch. *Russlands*. p. 308.
- A. K. Gaidukov, *Industrialisation of the Soviet Union* p. 105.
- B. See Soviet Russia. *Report on the First Five-Year Plan* p. 102.

B. The following table gives the average real wages of workers in the industry of the state sector in 1928 and 1937. The results of the rate of growth of real wages in the state sector can be seen in the following figures can be quoted:

In 1928 the average industrial wage per worker in the state sector of the economy was 120 rubles and that in 1937 it was 125 rubles. (See below) and the average product per worker increased by 10 percent. On the other side of industry in the same period the average product increased by 30 percent. (See below) Thus we can see that in 1937 the average real wage of workers in state-owned enterprises increased by 4.2 percent between 1928 and 1937. But in the period in making a comparison for price changes in 1928-1937 it is necessary to take into account the following Soviet industrial production index (see *Industrial Mass Production* p. 117) and also the average value of output per worker in 1928 (see *Industrial Mass Production* p. 117). The average value of output per worker in 1928 was 1700 rubles (see Carr and Debeney p. 327, table 4) which is equal to the average product per worker in 1928. Thus with the result the average wage of workers in state-owned enterprises was 11.7 percent higher in 1937 than in 1928 (that is to say, the average real wage of workers in state-owned enterprises increased by 4.2 percent over the average real wage from the base index of the rate of increase value can be calculated 4.9 percent in 1937).

In 1937 average labor productivity increased by 5.5 percent over 1928 according to the productivity index as revised by Hirschman (p. 115). (The figure is relevant) (here are the other index which shows an increase of 3.40 percent is correctly not suitable for reasons the one to long to give here) the rate of growth of industrial production per worker in 1937

- Robert in 1917 still presumes that his hypothesis that the rate of surplus value of production have moved at approximately the same rate since 1900 is not due to capitalism but compensated growth of productivity. His underestimation of the advances of production in the early 1920s is also admitted. Admitting that the real 1927 wage is 80 percent of 1913, he nevertheless states on account of more than 100 million of foreign workers abroad our worker over the capital wage at the 1927 level has a lower income of the rate of surplus value of the order of 600 francs.¹⁸³ This comparison with 1928 (the last of the available data) is even less favourable but it remains impossible to suggest anything else.
183. See J. Sapiro, *Organisation*, p. 368.
184. See above, pp. 154-55.
185. See C. Bettelheim, *La Transformation*, p. 108 n. 16, note 18.
186. From 1929 the Party warned about the new workers' strike which would worsen the situation of unaffordable. CP report 'Sur la situation du travail', p. 309.
187. See the political report presented by Robert to the National Executive Committee, June 2, 1929, in *Archives du Parti communiste français*, Vol. 2, pp. 498-97.
188. CPSS 1953] Vol. 2, pp. 498-97.
189. *Socialisme* No. 1, p. 14 (translation, 1924).
190. See above, p. 362.
191. An alternative English translation appears in *ibid.*, p. 115-16.
192. For his contribution see H. E. Ward, 'Influence of French Socialism on the Soviet Economy', in *ibid.*, p. 1, pp. 42-43.
193. See above, pp. 44 and 44-45; see also Sapiro, *ibid.*, p. 10.
194. See *Issues of Trade from May 1929*.
195. There is a short article of this period from preface and notes by Weltkrieg in A. Pauquier, *Le Syndicalisme et l'organisation du travail dans l'Allemagne 1917-1927* (especially pp. 1-10). The book may be a compilation of Weltkrieg's article up to 1924. See also J. Noguer, pp. 41-42 and C. T. Rutherford, 'The Internationalization of the German Labour Movement', *Review*, Nov. 12-13, September 1929, p. 10, 'November 1, 1929'.
196. These changes are summarized probably in A. Pauquier, *Le Syndicalisme et l'organisation du travail dans l'Allemagne 1917-1927* (especially pp. 1-10). The book may be a compilation of the parts belonging to Weltkrieg by collecting his contributions to the *Issues of Trade* (1917-1923) that joined and merged in the *Issues of Trade* (1924-1925) and continued until 1929. (A/285 1933), Vol. 2, pp. 4-5.
197. A. Pauquier, *Le Syndicalisme*, pp. 11-12.
198. See above, pp. 44-45 for a few aspects of the transformation of the old trade unions.
199. Cf. Schmitt to RMT quoted by Schwartz, p. 194.
200. See B. Weltkrieg, 'La transformation des organisations de l'industrie et le développement des syndicats dans l'Allemagne 1917-1927', in *Archives du Parti communiste français*, Vol. 2, p. 32.
201. See K. Marx, *Bruxelles Discourse*, Para. 1929, 'A Prose edition', 1961, p. 190.

- 203 B. Martin, "Le mouvement stakhanovite" notes that in 1935 50 to 70 percent of equipment in service in Soviet industry dated from after the commencement of the First Five-Year Plan. Their low utilization made possible the production increases due to the Stakhanovites movement. (See p. 20).
- 204 Trud, November 1, 1935 and Pravda, November 6, 1935. Also see the pamphlet "On Taylor & Stakhanov" (Cahiers de la Terre Libre), 1937.
- 205 These bonuses could reach 1,000 to 2,000 rubles per month whilst current monthly wages were 90 to 100 rubles. As well, notes Stakhanovites, especially those who received decorations, gained from various material advantages of various orders of magnitude. tax relief, free rides on some transport services, priority in housing allocations and places to holiday homes, gifts in kind, cars, motor cycles and so on.
- 206 See for example, Izvestiya, October 2, 1935, quoted in On Taylor & Stakhanov.
- 207 21 October 22, 1935
- 208 21 October 24, 1935
- 209 21 October 21, 1935
- 210 Stalin, Works, Vol. 13, p. 95
- 211 See above, p. 96
- 212 KPSS [1953], especially pp. 813-14
- 213 See A. Pasquier, *Le Stakhanovisme*, p. 70
- 214 Sotsialisticheskoe sotsializm v 1933-1940 god. Moscow 1963, p. 10* quoted by A. Novo. *An Economic History* p. 243
- 215 A. Pasquier, *Le Stakhanovisme*, pp. 50-54
- 216 It will be noted that in 1936 the advance of the average monthly wage was quite slow (+ 20 percent) taking into account the price rise of October 1935 and the substantial increases in Stakhanovites wages in the investigation the C. Friedmann made at the time in the U.S.R. he noted that in a certain number of the workshops he visited the nominal wages had fallen between period October 1935 to March 1936 and the period March-September 1936 (either because of new norms or because of bad production organization). See P. Friedmann, *On the Soviet Union* p. 114.
- 217 The first press of 1936 provides numerous examples of these practices which amounts to a radical transformation of the Stakhanovite movement and of their consequences. Also see however, 120-93-14.
- 218 For example, see Trud September 9, 1936.
- 219 C. Belikhovskii, *Le Planification soviétique*, p. 286 (total figure expressed in 1926-37 "prices" do not show the same inflation as see above, p. 1*) but to a large extent this is because of the way in which statistics presented in "prices" were made up.
- 220 Rukovodstvo No. 21, 1936, p. 67 and Pravda April 15, 1936 June 2, 1936. Rukovodstvo No. 21, 1936, p. 67 and Pravda April 15, 1936 June 2, 1936. Rukovodstvo No. 21, 1936, p. 67 and Pravda April 15, 1936 June 2, 1936. See also C. Rulifson, *Le mouvement stakhanovite*, pp. 243 ff.
- 221 See WKP 97, p. 4 and WKP 279 p. 172 of the Sovnarkom Archives.
- 222 Belikhovskii No. 21, 1936 pp. 71-72 and 73-74
- 223 C. Friedmann, *On the Soviet Union* pp. 112-14

- 225 *Pravda* March 26, 1930
- 226 *Pravda* April 13 1930 and June 2 1930
- 227 *Pravda*, June 7 1930
- 228 *Pravda*, June 23, 1930. Also see G. Rittersporn "Le mouvement stalhanoviste," pp. 270-7.
- 229 *Pravda*, July 10 1930 and the speech by J. Kaganovitch in the Central No. 4 1930. The situation in this period and the following two years analysed by G. Rittersporn in *Conférence aux* pp. 61-68
- 230 V.A.P. #95, pp. 1-5 & 2-26 in *Sovietisch Archiv*
- 231 See above pp. 19-25 quoted by G. Rittersporn *Conférence* pp. 11-17
- 232 Cf. Bettelheim *La Planification soviétique*, pp. 271 and 286
- 233 Calculated from V.A.P. #95 & p. 16. As is known, however, the production in money terms tends to show growth rates bigger than those measured on the basis of production statistics based on current measures.
- 234 A. Marx *Capital* Vol. 1, Moscow Eng. translation 1974, p. 10
- 235 See above, p. 200
- 236 See above, p. 209
- 237 See above, p. 458
- 238 See Vol. 1 of the present work, pp. 169-71
- 239 Various aspects of this struggle are covered in Vol. 2 of the present work pp. 240-41
- 240 On this point see M. Anstett *La Formation de la classe ouvrière dans l'URSS* (Paris, 1958).
- 241 See the observations made by G. Rittersporn in his book *Le mouvement stalhanoviste et son rôle dans l'économie soviétique* pp. 45-46
- 242 *Sovietische Wissenschaften* (Moscow) 1939, p. 1117-8 & SSSR, 1939, No. 69
- 243 See M. Anstett, *La Formation*, pp. 126-7
- 244 These schools trained 450,000 workers in this period. See A. Kostikov *The Development of the Soviet Educational System*, Cambridge 1954, pp. 214-217, which however represents only about 10 percent of the workers in Soviet industry. In Soviet industry 20% of the workers who graduated from these schools, moreover went through a short course in which did not give them a general view of the production process of which they were a part.
- 245 M. Anstett, *La Formation*, p. 128.
- 246 The number of students so trained by the universities grew from 1,100 during the first Five-Year Plan to 100,000 during the Second Plan, i.e. a 100 times increase by technical schools and special secondary schools grows from 29,000 to 523,000. A. Kostikov *The Development* p. 251. One striking characteristic of this training was that it was a bit too practical. The education given was predominantly theoretical. However this instruction was also very specialized. There was therefore a departure from polytechnical forms.
- 247 We deal with the mass repression and its contribution to the development of penal labor in Part 3 of this book. Here it will only be added

what this did to reduce the workers to a mere 'it goes too both ways' game and the successive extortions of party activity. However, at the end of the 1930s in the central part of the USSR there existed in each factory above ground a small 'isolated section' of the NKVD charged with shadowing the actions of the enterprise management and with using a network of informers to maintain a dossier on each worker who had earned 'fame and honour' in the Soviet system. The American *Far Eastern Review* (June 1956, p. 26).

- This will be studied in the fourth volume of this work.
 248 figures calculated from T H. Rigby, *Communist Party Membership in the USSR 1921-1967* (Princeton, 1968) pp. 12-14 and 116.
 249 Between this kind of behaviour was not rare. It appeared from 1926 onwards. It was often condoned by the high Party leadership but it did not prevent its continuation. At the beginning of the 1930s it became worse because the privileges enjoyed by Party members increased and these became especially visible after 1931 when 'rightists' were officially condemned.
 250 P. Kamenov 1934 p. 22 quoted by Rigby *Communist Party Membership* p. 104; other information on these points can be found in M. Arestoff, *The Commissar*, especially pp. 138 and 207ff.
 251 The main point is: neither too expansionist (that is, empire over the rest of the world), nor the leadership's political line; nor some imperialist ambitions. In 1923 the political war relations were then and generally remained so.
 252 The following quotations are from A. Gruia, *The Russian Empire* (London edition), pp. 76-78.
 253 This would imply that these members had already been sent to the front perhaps.
 254 See above, p. 76.
 255 See above, p. 77.
 256 See above, p. 78.
 257 T. Rigby, *Communist Party*, pp. 203-4.
 258 See above, p. 125.
 259 The workers' numbers are not stated from N. A. Tolodzij, *Il'ja Rastislavov i Plan Iraklija* p. 206.
 260 This event gave a reason to reorganise the order of the L. V. government. It was intended mainly for federal administration officials and their family members, more than for a regular public. I think it gave a certain degree of the bourgeois and paternalistic attitude which it maintained the USSR in the late 1930s and early 1940s. It was based on a comparison with the help of former Soviet prisoners of war and deportees who did not return to the USSR after the war. Despite the very particular circumstances in which it was done this effort seems to be relatively successful. The results helped as well to the later struggle obtained a position in the matters investigated. There is a report of the work N. A. Hayek, *American and Chinese Authors How the USSR Reacted to the Comintern Massacre*, 1964].
 261 See above, p. 101.
 262 See above, p. 104.

- 264 *Sovietische Archivien* W.R.P. 195 pp. 6-8) quoted by M. Piatrov, *op.cit.* p. 306.
- 265 See above, pp. 437-40.
- 266 B. Kozin et al. *How the Soviet System Works*, pp. 125-47.
- 267 See above, p. 257.
- 268 On this and the following points see A. Ulyanov, *The Soviet Economy* p. 245.
- 269 See A. Ulyanov, *Die Auswirkungen der sozialistischen Diktatur im Russischen Reich* [second edition, 1977], p. 231.]
- 270 These documents stand in sharp contrast to those in which economic managers and local or regional officials, for this the Party leaders, sought to rely on the public asking it to withdraw health claims. The first documents that adopted were the following. In December 1930, instructions concerning the obligations with which requests of compensation from the public were treated (Sovietische Archivien W.R.P. 195, p. 1), directors of the Supreme Court which prohibited the filing of collective claims of people regarding compensation, informing them of the *dekabrist* Andreevskii Bill (December 1930, p. 100), quoted by S. M. Gerasimov, p. 100 note 4; a decision of March 1931 that obliged managers, in order to protect the public health, issue appropriate letters and instructions to local districts (Supr. Sov. Res. 6, 1931, pp. 54-5); on 10 January 1932, measures were taken at the order of the central direction 'not to accept Complain p. 104 and measures after the defeat of encircling, belonging to eight of the work of several organizations and enterprises.
- 271 Thus in a letter of complaint there he said the following about the former's method of deteriorating the administration. This note was apparently written by the addressee of the letter himself (see *ibidem*, p. 118).
- 272 Sovietische Archivien W.R.P. 195 pp. 127-8; cf. 1219 in W.R.P. 195, 195, dated 200-211. See Kulturburo, p. 100.
- 273 Bettelheim, p. 109.
- 274 Sovietische Archivien W.R.P. 195 pp. 51-76. W.R.P. 195, p. 100; Bettelheim, p. 100.
- 275 Quoted by Bettelheim, p. 100 (Sovietische Archivien W.R.P. 195, p. 100). This suggests the existence of a document much more detailed and expressive by the author of the letter personally.
- 276 See above, p. 112.
- 277 See above, pp. 112-13.
- 278 This was confirmed by the case in different numbers of *Pravda* in the period 1930-31 in the columns devoted to discussions of the draft constitution.
- 279 See for example the speech by Stalin on May 6, 1937 in *Sovietische Vol. 1* [XIV], pp. 55-64.

PART 3

Mass terror and forced labor

The brutal expropriation of the peasantry, the accelerated rural exodus and the anti-worker offensives of the 1930s were accompanied, both as cause and effect, by a mass repression and a terror which allowed the development of capitalist forms of work and exploitation *sui generis*.

Repression and terror of the 1930s were linked to the completion of the capitalist revolution from above, which began at the end of the 1920s. At that time it was above all workers and peasants who were affected but members of other orgs. ns were also targeted when they were accused of being hostile to a policy that was presented as being the building of socialism.

On the other hand at the end of 1934 the same capitalist revolution embarked on a terror that was more "individualized" and "inquisitorial" than that which had preceded it. It systematically had recourse to other methods (long interrogations and tortures) and aimed at other social targets. Among the latter figured a large number of Party members, economic and administrative cadre, scientific workers, etc.

The terror in the main struck not the "guilty ones". At first it affected men sent without trial to deportation or death or it struck accused who might be the object of a "trial" that could be apparently meticulous but who were then sentenced even if they had not clearly committed the acts of which they were accused; these were the "innocents without crimes."

We shall see in Volume 4 of the present work that the transition to "individualized" and inquisitorial terror was mainly connected with social struggles denoucemental and political, within the leading or privileged state those belonging to those states were thereby placed in a situation

of enormous dependence on the good will of the Party leadership.

Through mass repression and terror there was achieved a social and political transformation which virtually gave birth to a capitalism of a new type, and which basically conformed with the ideas of the Party leadership.

Mass repression and terror

SINCE the first years of its existence, Bolshevik power had not hesitated to have recourse to brutal forms of repression and terror especially against workers or peasants who resisted it either for economic reasons (for example the peasants did during the Civil War because they tried to evade food requisitions which would have left them with nothing to eat, or for political reasons like the workers in sailors of Kronstadt who in 1921 demanded a return to the genuine power of the soviets).

Following 1917 and at the beginning of the 1920s repression and terror also struck of course members of the old dominant classes and equally the specialists and bureaucrats who were working for the new authorities if their activity did not deviate in the way the Soviets wished. Thus in September 1921 it was demanded that officials working for the state should suffer punishment for their inefficiency and that their trials should be regarded as a *political affair*. Instructions to this effect were given to the courts.

For most of the 1920s mass repression and terror were to dominate. They resumed from 1928 with the recourse to food requisitions and then collectivization from above.

L. The upsurge of mass repression and terror

Mass repression and terror began at the end of the 1920s. They were engendered above all by the anti-peasant struggle but also extended to the working class.

(a) The anti-peasant war

The historical starting point for the mass repression and terror was the anti-peasant war at the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s. This war resulted from the nature of the compromise that the NEP had established between the peasant revolution and the capitalist revolution: a rupture which henceforth would be pushed to the very end. This rupture if we look at it's hermeneutic way was accomplished in the name of the 'anti-kulak struggle' and of the building of socialism. It resulted in the expropriation of the peasants, the destruction of the peasant civilization and of the experience of freedom of the latter. It led to the development of social rural relations which tipped the rural workers into a new division - one and subjected them in new forms of control and exploitation. These upheavals encouraged resistance set up by the peasants who refused to integrate themselves into and into the new social relationships that the authorities imposed on them. It was this resistance that brought forth mass repression and terror. Repression struck millions of people and almost 10 million while millions of peasants died from famine that was largely fabricated in order to "punish their resistance" (the authorities refused to draw on grain stocks and let those peasants die who would not conform with their instructions). This anti-peasant war developed in two great waves. For the first wave of repression there is an official estimate of the number of peasants deported. According to this estimate deportations at that time struck 240,757 families (representing about 1.2 million people). It was stated that the majority of these deportees were not put in camps but were exiled to the populated regions of the North Siberia, Kazakhstan and the Urals. Those who were of working age were often forced to work under penalty to the state or to other collective farms.

some were in state farms (Others were so housed or in private houses in the regions to which they had immigrated). In fact some of the deportees were interned in work camps but how many is not known. However it is known that the term "camp" was in the widest possible connotation, containing categories that are mainly among young children and old people.

The second wave, 1932-34 of anti-peasant repression and now was not marked in any particular official document. Some Peasants were then deported for the most varied reasons. Many of those who continued to be described as kulaks or富农 were among them but others were accused of "sabotaging" the work of the kolkhozes or members of the theft of property belonging to the kolkhozes. And it was a question of gathering up gatherers of grain whatever as they did supply to ensure own and their animals survival.

During these years repression extended also through the repressive procedures of labour camps and as well as an increasingly extensive application of Article 58 of the criminal code of the RSFSR which allowed anyone to be sentenced who had committed an act intended to weaken the working of the authorities. And the police and the courts included in this type of act the non fulfilment of a work norm or more often of a task that had to be fulfilled. Thus according to the application of Article 58 also resulted the sentencing of those who had made critical remarks considered to be anti-Soviet or counterrevolutionary. Failure to denounce the author of such acts was also treated as an act which weakened the standing of the authorities and hence the actions which explains why the pattern of these trials of those condemned were also reflected in their laws. These latter forms of repression which struck not only the peasants developed well beyond the years 1932-34 that is when repression was transferred to Russia of whose main target was no longer the peasantry.

However before this transformation into legal offensives had been made by the party leadership to put a brake on the excesses of the anti-peasant repression because the negative effects this was causing. At the beginning of 1933 the wave of arrests and deportations became so great that

it had a bad effect on production and even resulted in a
stoppage the deportees being transported by train. At
various times the party leadership made a momentary effort to put
some repressive measures as is testified in a secret letter
to the editor of the main Soviet organ by Stalin and Molotov.
This letter dated May 6 1939 it was said in particular that

The Central Committee and Sovnarkom do not know
in detail but in the countryside blind and
thoughtless arrests still in part characterize the be-
havior of our officials. Such arrests are made by
village soviet chairman, secretaries of party orgs,
and responsible officers of the komsomol. Even
these arrests are made by anyone who likes to do so
and they have absolutely no right to do so. It is
surprising that with this org. of arrests being made by
organs which have the real right to do so, i.e.,
including those of the NKVD and especially the
militia are on the increase. If you receive information
of propagating abusive arrests on the part of the militia
arrest, then investigate.¹²

The letter indicates that at least 600,000
political犯 (political offenders) were
deportees. 400,000 were to be freed without
trial; these were to be transferred to labor
courts and the punishment was to be the
activity of the organizations dropped off.

For several months this situation remained until
the end of 1939 after the assassination of Khrushchev
reappeared on an even larger scale than in 1937.
The anti-peasant war than the anti-worker war.
The development of both quickly overwhelmed the
expressions of political struggle and the cap-
abilities of action.

(b) The anti-worker offensive

Although it is impossible to measure the extent of the
anti-worker repression and terror were apparently greater

a large scale as those who had run the peasants' resistance it took other forms because the party accorded to industrialisation did not allow the factories to be captured at the right proportionality of the workers.

Nevertheless it would be quite false to think that the workers were not touched by the repression. On the one hand the testimony of those who were held in the camps who came out of them and were able to make known what life was like in them at different times¹ reveals that a large number of workers were in the camps. On the other hand it is known that during the 1930s many factories were managed by the NKVD and that the workers who worked in them were those who had been sentenced. Finally the working class was hit throughout the 1930s by various repressive decrees in general provisions like Article 58 of the Criminal Code which condemned workers to be sentenced for non-compliance of norms of work for anti-Soviet tasks the slightest of which could be described as subversive and penal presumptions to be labor against.

Repression and a worker letter that it puts pressure on the industrial workers to a discipline that may be more or less brutal and to make them accept a series of norms of working and living conditions.

The threat of arrest or deportation of work in the camps subjected industrial transport, mining and construction workers to the increasing demands of factory bosses in which itself was pushed to an extreme point by the economic policy of the Party and by the requirements of obedient administration to work which it imposed. This threatened the same function as that which in the developmental western capitalism (especially in England, Germany and France) had been fulfilled by workhouses. It was able to impose a form of control and other forms of forced labor and of control of the poor.

The disciplinary function which repression carried out in regard to the working class during the 1930s of the NKVD is however deeper than that which at the beginning of war socialism was carried out in the forces of war. It was not a matter of getting accepted at the same time with a military career and an especially severe political despotism. Also the scale of repression and return to the Stalinist methods of control

The repression had a profound "disciplinary" effect in terms of daily attitudes. In fact, part of the *zakhi* (see list of abbreviations, on page xv), instead of being separated from free workers, were placed beside them, so the latter could see the catastrophic circumstances in which those who had been sentenced found themselves. The effect of terror thus imposed on the workers a discipline that was not only economic but also political: the disciplinary fear of criticizing the existing order.

Numerous testimonies indicate that the presence of detainees by the side of free workers was very frequent: some of these testimonies come from Soviet citizens who fled abroad,¹ and others from foreigners who worked in the USSR. For example, John Scott, an American who worked at the Magnitogorsk construction site in the mid-1930s, said that about 30 percent of the workers at this site were attached to various forms of penal labor; usually they were allotted to the hardest kinds of work.²

These various aspects of the mass repression and terror represent the most extreme forms of the struggle of the dominant to subjugate, oppress and exploit to a maximum the dominated classes. They did have their equivalent in the capitalist centers and even more in countries under colonialism or imperialism. They can still be found today in a certain number of American and southern African countries. The development of the individualized and inquisitorial terror which took shape on a large scale from 1935 constitutes, on the contrary, a particular phenomenon, connected with the specific form of capitalism which at that time was born in the Soviet Union.

H. The "Individualized" and inquisitorial terror of 1935-38

The late 1920s and early 1930s were marked by the first outburst of individualized and inquisitorial terror. This began in 1929 with the trial of non-Bolshevik engineers and technicians at Shchelkovo and continued through several other show trials like those organized against the alleged "industrial party" or against the "peasant party." But these were only preludes, which did not directly involve members of the Party. The real

1932-1933 and most of 1934 were even characterized by a relaxation of mass repression and of the different forms of terror. But suddenly from December 1 1934 following the assassination of Kirov (Party secretary at Leningrad), the country entered a period of terror whose development was on that scale of the Party leadership. From the second half of 1936 and up to the end of 1938 this terror merely intensified and its qualities took an exacerbated form. From 1939 to the death of Stalin in 1953 it became more routine (without becoming less extreme or less brutal especially as it combined with new developments in repression) but there were new explosions after the war. Some of the occurrences which inaugurated the terror of 1934-38 as well as some of their most spectacular manifestations should be mentioned.

On December 1 1934 in the afternoon, Kirov was assassinated by a young communist quickly accused of having acted under the influence of the ideas of old Party leaders who had been removed from power since the late 1920s Zinoviev and Kamenev. In reality the very way in which this event took place (as well as its aftermath) makes it almost certain that the assassination was organized by Stalin with the help of the NKVD. The speed with which the mechanism of terror was unleashed amply confirms this.

In addition to details about the circumstances of the assassination one of the most striking facts is the signature of the same day as the assassination of a decree which organized the final procedure of the NKVD. This decree was certainly prepared in advance. Another noteworthy detail in that the decree was signed by the state authorities without the Politburo having been told which was contrary to all the rules about the pre-eminence of the Party over the state. It was only on the following day that the Politburo acted with its 'ad hoc' committee the decree. The latter radically modified judicial procedure. It forced investigatory organizations to carry out death sentences pronounced for this category of crimes immediately without awaiting positive decisions from the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee. The organ of the NKVD that is the police also received the order to execute without delay those sentenced to death. The decree was published on December 2 and on December 10 the Criminal Procedure Code

was made as far as radio organs were concerned. In NKVD and these usual propaganda enterprises it was not unusual without investigation or trial.⁴

On December 6 there was pronounced a long sentence against arrested and condemned to death in Moscow ten men. Similar sentences were pronounced by 100 of the Soviet courts especially in the Ukraine over some days after the real targets of the terror had been the authorities of power. These targets were the leaders of former oppositionists who were then members of the Party, then all those later on called "saboteurs," or "spies."

Before mid December 1934 (in fact the Central Committee of the local Party committees of the Ukraine) the expulsion and arrest of an oppositionist from the Party was the initiative of the secret police, the NKVD and a press campaign directed against the Tatars and the Crimeans. At least 100,000 men of people were deported following this campaign. It had been Kirov or Kamnev or Zinov'ev who was writing.⁵ (In December 16 a resolution of the Central Committee denounced the anti-Party group of former Communists as being responsible for the assassination. On December 17, the Moscow committee voted a similar resolution.) (December 17, 1934)

On December 22 Pravda published a list of arrested leaders in which were included Zinov'ev and the other members of the Politburo. And it was proposed to them for their political responsibility in the assassination. However, the political situation was such that no severe sentence against these two but also against January to 1933. They were sentenced respectively to five years in prison after which Zinov'ev was released to self-exile. In which he declared that the practice of the opposition had urged him to commit a crime due to "objective circumstances."⁶

In the following months arrests and deportations made simple decisions of the NKVD proliferated. During the entire time of deportation but from the different regions of Soviet Ukraine to fill the prisons and the camps, the great

spoke of these trains as being the "trains of death" or assassins the same term Kirov's assassin was used in the attempt to describe these new waves of deportees.¹⁷ Henceforth the situation became worse for political prisoners was suffered everyone being subjected to a harsh regime.

This assassination of Kirov was the starting point for a wave of repression whose scale increased from 1935 to 1938 with the most typical manifestations of individualized and collective terror occurring between 1936 and 1938.

One of these manifestations were the so-called show trials in Moscow but there were others. These trials simultaneous prepared (up to a certain point) and obscured the massive scale of the terror and its real significance. We shall return to this in Volume 4 of the present work when we shall examine the social, political and ideological contradictions which contributed to development of state terror.

(a) The three Moscow "Great Trials"

In chronological order these three trials were the trial which began on August 19 1936 called the "Trial of the Sixteen" after the number of accused the two main accused being Zinov'ev and Kamenev the trial which began on January 21 1937 where there were 18 accused but often called the

Piatakov Trial the trial which began on March 2 1938 and frequently described as the *Bukharin Trial* because the latter was the principal accused although at his side appeared a Stalinite (Yagoda the former chief of the NKVD and the organizer of the two preceding trials) Krestinsky and several other old Bolsheviks.

These trials took place in public and were presented with real stage management. Reading the transcript of these trials it would seem that in effect not only the prosecutors and judges were playing a role which had been assigned to them by the accused were also doing the same thing.¹⁸

The accused admitted practically all the crimes which the authorities required them to confess. If one or another of them strayed a little from his role or momentarily hesitated to accuse himself the intervention of the prosecution visibly brought

him to order if these interrogations were not enough "suspensions of the session" were ordered, following which the accused rediscovered the "path of confession." Since then it has been learned that the confessions were extracted by all possible means, including torture, to which both the accused and those people close to them were subjected.

These trials served as prototypes for thousands of others which took place all over the Soviet Union and resulted in death sentences, prison sentences, or deportation. They served as "demonstration of the all-powerfulness of the police and to orchestrate great ideological campaigns aimed at proving the criminal nature of all opposition, real or assumed."

Without recourse to the proofs that later became available, the fabricated nature of these great trials, a careful analysis of the official transcripts reveals the inconsistent contradictions and implausible nature of the basic accusations, as well as the "confessions" which were used to "confirm" the truthfulness of the accusations.²⁰ Putting the known facts and the "confessions" side by side clearly shows the absurdity of almost everything that was "confessed."²¹

(b) The liquidation of the army officers and the High Command

Although it did not take the form of a show trial, the liquidation of the army High Command and the main military leaders cannot be separated from the great trials. In fact, those who were subject to this liquidation were, like the Moscow accused Party members of long standing, and they had passed the test of fire. The trials of these military leaders developed from the spring of 1937.²² They took place "discreetly" and rapidly.

On May 11, 1937, the Chief of Staff of the Far East Army, Corps Lapor' was arrested he would commit suicide in his prison cell. On May 31, 1937, Garmashik, head of the army's political directorate and who had always been devoted to Stalin, likewise "committed suicide." On June 11 there was the arrest, the sentence (in closed court) and the execution of nearly all the High Command: Tukhachevsky, Yel'yan Uborevich and many others. The "purge" of the army continued up to 1941.

Among those who were dismissed, arrested and sentenced were seven deputy commissars of defense. Three out of the five marshals, fifteen out of the fifteen commanders of military districts, three out of the four army commanders of first rank, all twelve army commanders of second rank, forty of the sixty-seven corps commanders, one hundred and thirty-six of the one hundred and ninety-nine division commanders, and from 15,000 to 20,000 others. To an equally massive scale provincial commissioners and naval officers were also struck.²²

Finally the military leaders who were arrested and executed were accused of having prepared a "coup d'état" that would have included the ousting of the Kremlin by the army officers, the physical liquidation of the Party leadership, the occupation of the NKVD headquarters etc. To these accusations were added those of spying for Germany and the setting up of a secret military organization within the armed forces.

The secret nature of the trials of the military leaders allowed the prosecution to dispense with publishing even the semblance of "proof."²³

We shall see in Volume 4 of the present work that the secret trials were the most visible peak of a system designed to eliminate on a large scale several strata of political and economic cadres. In essence this operation had started at the end of 1936, because the goal pursued was probably accomplished moreover continuation of the same strategy. The latter combined with mass repression was seriously disturbed during the intensity of the terror was then reduced, though it was far from disappearing. In effect it was part of the technique of governing. In addition mass repression continued because the authorities had to make their威嚇 to those who were liable to resist them and it was necessary to continue supplying the camp with able power.

(c) The continuation of mass repression and terror after 1938

In the short account given here of the continuation of mass repression and terror after 1928 it is obviously important to make a distinction between the years 1938-41 and the following years.

(1) 1939-41

In 1939-41 mass repression and terror took essentially a dual form. We have already seen what hit them. And we were pulling into effect of large legislation of an immense nature. Secondly, there was what developed after June 1939, when repression and terror struck the population. Stories abound concerning the signature of the German-Polish Pact for example a short while after the occupation of Poland by Soviet troops, the NKVD deported 15,000 to Siberian camps.¹ After the annexation of the Baltic states, persecutions of the population also took place on the largest scale. It is estimated that 170,000 inhabitants of these states were added to the deportees from Poland, Ukraine and Belarus.

In addition to these mass police operations, there was individualized terror which struck leading cadres, party and higher officers who had played an especially active role in the execution of the anti-fascist policy and whose names were associated with the League of Nations. Thus at the end of 1937 the year of German-Soviet Pact, arrests were made of some of the leaders of the anti-fascist committees working in Moscow and other large cities also arrested were some of the chiefs of the spy network involved in the collection of information in the "Axis countries" (Rome - Berlin - Tokyo) networks which for a long time remained disorganized. Terror also struck former participants in the Spanish War. While from 1939 the trials that had begun in 1936 were continued and brought to a satisfactory conclusion resulting in thousands of verdicts and executions.

(2) Repression and terror during the war and after

The war and the post-war period witnessed a continuation of large-scale repression and terror. These operations reduced the population to slavery and kept the camps well populated. The camps thereby received bits and pieces of population which were sent where the authorities thought they were needed.

During the war most important unit which they struck the nationalities centers of the Caucasus, Ingushes, Chechens,

over 1000000 of them were either deported to camps, or transferred to the interior of Soviet Russia. In addition to this, many more than 1000000 had to leave the country.

As he said in the war against the Rightists - the Rightists in the Soviet Union was German and Japanese and so on - others are examples of this. Above all, greater numbers were the majority of Soviet citizens who left their posts, places of work and especially to Germany or to capitalist countries, for example Poland, members and leaders left the Soviet Republics and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Republics did not have the right of leaving even to the representative states of the Soviet Union, and deportations were had enough from the Soviet Union.

From 1945 new agreements made between Moscow and the "republics" were made. In certain regions these agreements gave the Party leaders and industrial managers

the right to leave the Soviet Republics among whom they were allowed to leave in large numbers were deported if they did not want to remain and reported some of the workers who were deported because where they continued the workers' committees would not be in the camp. During the year of 1950 there were open or undercover agents throughout the Soviet Union and particularly which showed the kind of one of the Soviet people and he a real and example of a comrade (but as a cosmopolitan without country")

Stalinov the members in the Soviet Union who were the most radical as one of the initiators of the execution of Khrushchev was lack of the Lenin's leadership in regard to the masses according to the term of making the better life for the masses and the better life for the people

The struggle against communism took place and that is what it was what was done the Lenino-Aristo and the Khrushchev-Aristo. These entered the winter of 1953 and the summer of 1954 and again of the former like Nikolai Voznesensky, a Rightist member and later to become a Rightist member and leader of the Rightists for the Rightists. His longer and longer of his influence for the Rightists. His party was started back up to 1962. The two main officials of this party were Malenkov and Beria.³¹

It can be seen the attempt from the Rightists that has caused another other was being prepared and the need that was that to be better done was required. However, since he

death of Zinoviev and other leaders.¹⁰ This plot which was also called the plot of the white-coats was entirely staged by the police services under the direct control of the Gestapo secretary. It had several targets. It was a continuation by an anti-Zionist camp so that was in fact antisemitic. That was done openly on an international scale and that led from that to the idea that it should be countries of many leaders as well of Zionist and other activists among them were Ruth Borch, and others (who later would be released freely). At the same time the campaign was aimed at the leaders of the workers' movement themselves (who were accused of having worked for Hitler). In fact the accused doctors were freed as early as April 1945 by decision of Berlin who was then in charge of security. But some months later here and there new accusations were exercised and in the list of accusations against them among others were the same charges that had already been brought against the Jews.

After the death of Stein his attitude to his former
recalled terror which was on large scale and was
developed from an effect of whose trial. He was now
quiet and accusations no longer tended to appear. His
life and increasingly important office however did not
allow him to fabricate accusations did not disappear. In
fact he was not the only one who was doing this. The
changes in the charge can be easily seen the estimate
now is about between the charging that as a result of
the leading party a group and the estimate of the
changes affecting their rights and the right of

In the South prior to 1940 there was little unionization with mass repression by plant owners and local officials stamping the relationship of the leading unions as "communist fronts and leaders of the revolution" and even killing unionists but also allowing regular supplies to be sent with new labor forces.

Notes

1. **What is the best way to prevent the spread of disease?**
A. Quarantine people who are sick.
B. Wash your hands.

- A. Vilenkin. Rapport sur les réformes collectivisatrices, in *Révolution communiste & la fin des idées marxistes*, No. 4, 1978 (pp. 5-11).
- Comintern Archives, WKP 178 pp. 134-35, quoted from M. T. Karpov, p. 183.
- Among these texts the most interesting sources probably are those written by The Russian Regime in general after the October Revolution. French and English: M.H. Beerman. *Impression sur l'URSS et l'U.R.S.S. à l'époque des réformes collectivisatrices* (Paris, 1921); L. G. Krasin. *Notes de voyage dans l'URSS* (Paris, 1921); S. G. Kirov. *Notes de voyage dans l'URSS* (Paris, 1921); N. Tamm. *La Russie soviétique survue à l'automne 1922* (Paris, 1923); I. Kopelev. *A conserver pour l'éternité* (Paris, 1926).¹⁰ (see also: A. Grishanov. *Le russe à l'époque des réformes collectivisatrices* (three volumes); E. Germashoff. *Une petite patrie*, (Paris, 1979).
- See for example the several versions of the important article by G. K. Gaidarovskiy about Khrushchev's report on the agricultural collectivization (Baltimore, n.d.).
- See Part 2 of this volume.
- For the terms of work see K. Marx. *Capital* (O. & M. Meissner ed., Vol. 1, pp. 263 and 275). Also M. Dibb. *Stalin in the USSR* (presented Capitalism (London, 1964)), p. 234.
- Among the first one witnesses in the immediate post-war period were A. Krushchëv and his book *7 Chose russes*. See also the notes mentioned.
- These facts have been provided by John F. C. H. Lee, in his memoirs of the S. embassy in Moscow. See in particular his unpublished report of the period. See on his part the article in *Voprosy i issledovaniya* 1975. Assessing the size of the rural labour force in the Soviet Union 1919-1956 in Soviet statistics April 1976, p. 371 note 1. This more or less only confirmation of the figures in numerous other sources.
- See Vol. 2 of the present work.
- 1. In the sense that it gave rise to formally parallel but in fact very different political reports to the government and the party. According to the official formulae and officially accepted figures there were more than a million deaths taken to the account of the famine.
- 2. In the book by R. Conquest. The author, however, has not included the detailed account of the matter of the so-called 'famine' in the various arguments (including to prove that the famine was created by Stalin and carried out with the help of NKVD agents). The comments of Krushchëv and other party leaders at the 1956 Hungarian Party Congress on the peasant death might seem to be the clearest proof without drawing delicate conclusions. See for example their speech at the 1957 Central Committee meeting of the Hungarian Party members of the Central Committee.
- 3. The corresponding speech of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Party members of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Party, see the second report of Krushchëv to the session of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party in connection with the Stalin Dictatorship (London, 1960).

The supreme proof

As Solzhenitsyn remarks, 'the criterion which enabled the ~~decisions~~ to be made as to whom should be arrested was blind and irrespective of whether one was a hero of the Civil War or an old member of the Party, one went into exile' A. Solzhenitsyn, *Sobranije Sochinenij Vt*, 1980 (this Vol I of *The Gulag Archipelago*, p. 86) See also R. Conquest, *The Soviet Police System*, p. 49, where different Soviet sources are quoted about the lot of the 'nationalities' mentioned above as well as several others. Also see B. Levitsky, *The Uses of Terror* New York 1971, pp. 156ff

- 32 On this subject see N. Bethell, *The Last Secret* (London, 1971)
33. P. Broué *Le Parti bolchevique*, pp. 447-48, and Z. Brzezinski, *The Permanent Purge* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956).
34. B. Levitsky, *The Uses of Terror*, pp. 185ff
35. M. Heller and A. Nekrich, *L'Utopie au pouvoir* (Paris, 1982) pp. 415ff
36. See above, pp. 419ff
37. See B. Nikolaeovsky *Les dirigeants*, p. 149 Armstrong, *The Roots of Totalitarianism* (New York, 1961), pp. 235ff; M. Fatsosod *How Russia is Ruled* (New York 1963), p. 50, and L. Shapiro, *The Communist Party* pp. 549ff
- 38 To quote but one example, when Beria was condemned he was accused of being a "bourgeois turncoat," an 'agent of imperialism,' and it was even stated that in a "closed trial" he had confessed to having carried on anti-soviet activities from 1919 (See the Soviet press of December 1953, especially 'Izvestia' of December 24)

The cumulation of mass repression and terror

Mass repression differed from terror not by the number of people that it affected (which in the circumstances was considerable), but in the fact that the victims of the former were stricken for acts that they were said to have committed or for their opinions (and the definition of "offences" and "crimes" stayed vague, with "proofs" often doubtful) whilst the victims of the second were stricken even when this was not acknowledged by the authorities—by reason of their social origins, their presumed attachment to a definite stratum of society or to a current of opinion or to an institution, or because they carried on certain professions whose members had been taken as "targets." Victims of terror could be pursued "individually," with investigations, etc., and this gave birth to a special form of terror which we have already called "individualized" and "inquisitorial."

In practice it is not always possible to distinguish between mass repression and terror, especially when the victims of terror were tried with due respect to the forms of penal law. Nevertheless it is necessary to make a distinction in principle between these two ways of subjecting the population to state violence.

The most obvious cases are those of the old leaders of the Party and of the revolution, accused of being—without the slightest real proof—spies, saboteurs, and agents of imperialism. Such accusations were sometimes made against

Party members who had never been oppositionists and who had always supported Stalin. This happened often in 1937 and again from 1946-5 - especially with the Lettia grid affair.

The cases belonging to this type of sentence were so numerous that it is impossible to list them. For example there were the economic cadres working in branches of the economy who were functioning badly, who were accused of being saboteurs or agents of foreign powers or again those who were in institutions whose director had been sentenced for opposition and who in their turn were sentenced either at that same trial or another (for example the general secretary of the Ministry because she had worked under a Russian accused of Treason, and but they brought against her the Jews accused her own self accused her in 1937 of having participated in the assassination of Kirov even though she had never lived in Leningrad and had no connection with this assassination). There were also all those who were condemned in several trials because they had long a history and let fall some word mentioned as anti-Soviet certain words or used of Trotsky without even knowing what that meant ("sabotage by a member of the security organs ordered the arrest of a certain number of Trotskyites and they have used this law on certain number of arrested persons. The arbitrariness of the arrests engendered an atmosphere of terror and fear that kind of passive cooperation. The letter was the letter of a balance and was maintained by the existence of a secret army of informers, so much so that there was a feeling in this state of the population what were not specific targets of the letter that everybody was afraid of everybody."

Terror in combination with these repression that involved numerous penitentiary acts that were not although illegal and which were covered by the extraordinary wide control. This latter constituted an instrument of government. It developed on the basis of informing which became a civic condition of self accusation. The methods of inquiry became more and more harsh going as far as psychological and physical torture and including threats against the families of the accused. The use of such methods succeeded in creating self accusations. A common phenomenon which made the security services

was only too ready." It facilitated the fabrication of accusations and, last but not the least, it enabled the investigators had to do in this result. Their task was not to "show over the truth" but to elaborate an accusation which would take its place in a ~~new~~ campaign fuelled by adverse ~~a~~ plan which determined the ~~conclusion~~ of the accusations of the investigation and the ~~replies~~ which had to be obtained at any price as well as the scenario of the trial.

Contrary to what the present day Soviet leaders claim with references not to terror but to mistakes, the victims of the latter were very far from ~~com~~ of simple main, cadres or members of the privileged strata. However, it is on these victims that present-day Soviet historians (with more and more desperation) put their emphasis just as did the Stalinist propaganda of the time. The letter in doing this succeeded up to a certain point in giving to terror the image of a struggle against the privileged classes who were abusing their privileges and this explains why the letter was able to evoke some good will among the ~~privileged~~ state and was able to give a certain popular basis to the authorities.⁹

State terrorist activity rolled along in violation of laws promulgated by the authorities but simultaneously it was able to assume the image of an extreme "legalism" thus in matters of individualized and individual terror the accounts of interrogations were most often drawn up in a strictly proper way, the signature of the accused had to be attached and the papers of the dossier had to be carefully preserved. Naturally, all the offices which the accused had to suffer did not appear there in more than d d dossiers concerning the thousands of ~~cases~~ of torture which took place without trial and even without investigation.

I. The scale of repression, terror, and forced labor

It is impossible to measure accurately the scale of these repressions because no official statistics of any significance exist on this subject. Moreover, it is probable that the exact number of those who were arrested and deported was not even known

to the Soviet leaders themselves. It is therefore only possible to put forward estimates using the testimony of former detainees or former members of the repressive organizations and some statistical data about the total population of the Soviet population and the number of wage-earners. In this way at least orders of magnitude can be estimated.

This situation was characterized by the variety of "NKVD operations" and also by the multiplicity of forms of repression and terror. The victim could be kept in prison or exiled, sent to a far distant camp belonging to GULAG, or a local camp close to their original place of work, deprived of a fixed place of residence but without being a located or assigned to work or eliminated both as a place of residence and as place of work but without being detained.

The variety of forms of repression, the variety of trials and the variety of sources for estimation explain why there have been suggested not only the figure of victims which are very difficult from each other.

It is not my intention here to recall the various estimations which have been made nor to subject them to a detailed comparison. I wish above all to direct attention to two points: the size of the prison camp population and its living and working conditions on the one hand, the number of deaths due to repression and the demographic balance in the 1930s on the other hand. However, I will give priority to the problem of the camps which were connected with the primitive forms of exploitation and, above all, the development of a particular form of labor. The latter constituted a specific form of labor which played a considerable role in the economic and social transformation of the 1930s. In addition, its existence raises questions of history and of fundamental theory.

(a) The birth and growth Gulag

Prison camps existed very early in the history of Soviet Russia but for a long time their population was small. As late as 1928 the population of the camps was estimated by a former agent of the GPU Kirovograd province to be only about 30,000 persons.¹ This population played practically no economic role. It was

case up until now the form of systematically exploiting the labor of those detained in camps was retained. This at the time an official of the Soviet power system can declare:

The exploitation of prison labor - the system of squeezing golden sweat from it the organization of production is places of confinement which while profitable from a commercial point of view, fundamentally lacking in corrective significance; these are entirely inadmissible in Soviet places of confinement.¹²

In 1928 the attitude of the authorities concerning concentration camp labor changed with the adoption by Sovnarkom of a decree dated March 26, 1928. This decree enabled camp detainees to be attached to construction sites.¹³

Comments which accompanied the decree made it clear that the authorities henceforth considered that the existence of detainees presented a direct economic interest that it was necessary to increase the reception capacity of labor colonies and to extend or to multiply those camps which were allocated to "productive work."¹⁴

Henceforth the camps rapidly proliferated. Also a decree of 25 February 1930¹⁵ accorded a special economic status to organizations using penal labor the latter being used more and more in areas where free workers were insufficient because living conditions were very difficult building sites of the trans-Siberian part of Siberia and in the far east construction of the Baku-Amur railway (BAM) gold mines in the far north notably at Koyma, and the Siberian forest.

In 1930 administration of the camps was withdrawn from the Justice Commissariat and transferred to the NKVD where it became the Main Administration of corrective labor camps. Yagoda was in charge of this activity at the time.

One of the first great works achieved with forced labor was the construction of a canal linking the White Sea with the Baltic. The construction of this canal took place between September 1931 and April 1933. Many people died there, in conditions which have been described by one of the survivors, O. Vitkovskii.¹⁶

At the time, the achievement of this work was presented as an "epic" by certain Soviet writers, including M. Gorky and A. Tolstoy,¹⁶ but they said nothing about the innumerable deaths which took place on this work site, just as on so many other. Afterwards "eulogies" of concentration camp labor were made by many writers and Soviet leaders by Molotov at the Sixth Congress of Soviets of the USSR, and in the Great Soviet Encyclopedia. For example, one can read in this after:

The grandiose victory of socialism on all fronts has made possible the employment on a large scale of the work of criminals for the general construction of socialism. With the entry of the USSR into the period of socialism the possibility of utilizing coercive measures in corrective labor grew enormously.¹⁷

In the second half of the 1930s concentration camps which developed under the supervision of Tagansk¹⁸ were further at first under the leadership of Fzhov¹⁹ (from the end of 1938) and then under Beria.²⁰

The management of the camps was carried out then in service of the NKVD, called Glavnoye Upravleniye Gulag. At this time this service had two central directorates in Moscow (administration of camps and railways and administration of transport). The different camps were entirely subordinated to the NKVD. The system had its own armed forces, police and was subdivided into regions. Thus in the Kirov region there functioned the Bezmen'lag system which included a vast munitions production center and directorates, enterprises and numerous camps (Lagpunkts) where there were several thousand detainees. The latter were supervised by armed sentries who could kill them on the slightest pretext. Apart from members of the armed forces the camps had no other "free" men apart from the camp doctors, tailors, workers, bookkeepers, "planners," supervisors of agricultural stock managers etc., were detainees. Among them one accordingly found the "Soviet hierarchical structure" including people with various privileges (especially privileges involving food rations). Most usually, those who had been promoted

or over their arrest rapidly gained some privileges in the camps except when they had committed or had been said to have committed state crimes of a special gravity.²¹

Vorogov is one of the first to have noticed that the hierarchical structure of the camps tended to reproduce that of Soviet society in general and he illustrated this observation with three examples. He wrote

This tendency resulted in the following paradox: the workers and peasants slaved at the lower level while members of the classes that were said to have been abolished or hostile received favorable treatment, enjoying privileges and being in good terms with the representatives of the authorities.²²

The author talks of the high salaries received by the concentration camp engineers (3000 rubles monthly) and indicates that the latter "lived with the GPU and Party leaders and formed with them a sort of élite caste."²³

Penal labour did not embrace solely those who were in the big camps. In fact in 1934, when the all Soviet NKVD was formed, the camps which had been under the Justice Commissariat were transferred to the GPU administration. The Gulag supervised the system of big camps whose basic unit was the LAG (Separate Industrial Regime) and the small camps, the LIK in which were to be found those who had been sentenced to no more than three years. These condemned slaves were held in old places of work. They could even continue in the daytime to go to the same factory as before their sentencing but they received a reduced wage.

In other of its camps the NKVD supervised laboratories in which detailed researchers worked in conditions less harsh than those of the concentration camps. This was the share system²⁴ described by Solzhenitsyn in *The First Circle*.

The construction of the vast GPU administrative apparatus, the development of repression and terror and hence the upsurge in the numbers of concentration camp inhabitants or more generally the zeks. This upsurge of numbers occurred in successive waves

(2) The population of the camps

I have already indicated the obstacles that one runs into when trying to estimate the number of the victims of repression. As far as the numbers in the camps nevertheless it is possible to give some indication of the extent of massacre. I will quote mainly the figures which appear in the table beginning with those covering the years 1930-38.

According to Tally and Nekolsky²² who quote an official of the camps Kostylev Gremov the number of inhabitants in the camps in 1936 exceeded 600,000. The same author estimates the number of camp prisoners at around 2 million in 1932 whilst Weiss has the figure of 1.62 million for the period 1933-37. For 1938 this latter author suggests the figure of 1.4 million as the concentration camp population.²³ In the estimates that one can make today of the number of camp inhabitants in 1939 this last figure seems to be rather accurate (although it is not possible to suggest another).

For 1939 it is possible to reach a figure, an estimate at least as certain than for other years thanks to the population census whose results were published in detail in Dec. 1963 at the same time as the results of the 1959 census. The figures made public obviously do not answer clearly the question of concentration camp inhabitants however by comparing the population balances provided by the 1919 census with other data also published (for example the number of older wage earners and the number of children) it is possible to suggest plausible figures concerning the censuses of the same year. According to Stephen C. Whittlesey who has made various researches the maximum number of persons in camp or habitants in 1939 was from 4 to 5 million.²⁴ In 1940 and 1941 this number doubtless increased but it would be risky to suggest figures.

It will be noted that the figure of from 4 to 5 millions of concentration camp inhabitants in 1939 agrees quite well with another estimate, that made by A. Savin who used the figures from the secret 1941 economic plan which contained data relating to the establishments and work sites administered by the NKVD and employing camp labor.²⁵

(c) *The living conditions of the zek's*

It is necessary to say a few words about the living conditions of the camp inmates in camp 151 which have been described a very important feature of mass repression in and before 1953. However what can be said in this section in a few lines is necessarily schematic and not capable of doing justice to an atrocious reality.²⁰ For this nothing can replace the accounts and the memoirs already quoted if gathered from former camp inmates.

From these accounts it is clear that the camp inmates suffered a work regime of extreme harshness involving very heavy tasks and very long days; in general they were undernourished and abandoned to the arbitrariness of their guards. The latter could use all kinds of pretexts to make ever worse the living conditions of the detainees and even to execute or leave to die, very many of them.

A large proportion of the zek's had to work in regions where there was intense cold and in which no free labor could have been persuaded to work sometimes for twelve or sixteen hours per day. For example, describing the construction (of penal labor) of a new railway in Siberia, *Sverdlov* wrote:

'Up until now it was believed that the construction season could not exceed 100 days a year. The winter is very cold 5° below zero. But the construction workers have proven that even in such conditions it is possible to work from one end of the year to the other without interruption.'

The newspaper obviously did not say a word about the number of those who perished having to work in such conditions. Nor did it specify that it was not only the builders of the railroad who had to carry out their work in a hellish cold but also millions of detainees allocated to the working of mines (notably the Kolyms Gold Mines 10 years, construction of big building sites, etc.)

Meanwhile the undernourishment which afflicted the camp workers had a cumulative effect. In fact those who did not succeed in fulfilling their work norm had their already poor

food ration reduced. Consequently they became weaker and fulfilled their norm even less satisfactorily which led to another ration reduction and finally to total collapse.

During the 1930s in the Arctic regions, the daily bread ration (the essential basis of nourishment) could vary from 400 grams for those who exceeded their norms, to 500 grams for [redacted] who fulfilled their norms by 50 to 60 percent and 350 grams as the 'disciplinary ration.' Quite often the set rations were not distributed in full, especially the few grams of animal protein (salt fish) which were part of these rations.

Undernourishment and ill treatment in the camps led to heavy mortality but the latter constituted only one aspect (separated from the others only with difficulty) of the mortality due to repression and, more generally, the demographic effects of this latter.

(d) *The children in the camps*

It is impossible to talk about the scale of the repression and terror without saying some words about the way in which the state's activities affected the fortunes of a great number of children.

On the one hand, from the beginning of the 1930s with the deportation of millions of 'kulaks' and 'prokulaks' either their children were deported with them or they were left at the spot, usually abandoned by the authorities. They then formed wandering bands of orphan children who could exist only by robbing, so much so that they were dealt with by Article 12 of the Penal Code.

At first the judges interpreted the code with a modicum of leniency that was not for long accepted by the authorities. In a decree of April 8, 1935 explicitly laid down that children under 14 years of age would be sentenced to the same punishment as adults, including the death sentence and long-term deportation.²⁴ On May, 31 1941 that is before the war with Germany another decree specified that minors of 14 years should be prosecuted just like adults for crimes and offences not covered by Article 12. These two decisions and the practices that went with them showed in a startling way what was really meant by the

'youth for the young about which the regime boasted. The stories of former deportees showed that children were numerous in the camps even though they had died there.'

Among the children who were imprisoned or deported were above all from 1937 the older children whose parents had been arrested. Henceforth in the NKVD prisons there were quarters for children (*detsnemniki*). Quite often the children of those condemned to death were also executed.¹⁹ This type of repression was not characteristic only of the *vezhovshchina* but was still practiced at the end of the 1940s, notably at Leningrad and Moscow in 1949.

II Repression and its demographic effects

Although it is impossible to estimate the number of deaths due to the different aspects of mass repression, an attempt can be made to estimate the mortality due to the camps and to the executions ordered by the camp authorities, and to try to reconstruct the demographic balance of the repression in a wide sense. The latter includes the famine which struck the countryside in 1932-34, for this was due largely to the wish of the authorities to "punish" the peasants.

(a) Mortality in the camps

The regime imposed on the camp inmates was such that during certain periods deaths were counted in hundreds of thousands. So, the total of the camps especially on the Yenisei Railroad,²⁰ the Belomor Canal, in the camps and mines of Kolyma,²¹ etc.

The Kolyma camps were part of the Dalstroi complex which occupied a territory four times greater than that of France. Placed entirely under the authority of the NKVD, Dalstroi embraced the basins of the rivers Kolyma and Indigirka (northeastern Siberia). There, among other things, were 86 gold mines that before the war produced 300 tons of gold annually (the equivalent of 3 m. lion dollars at the current price of gold). In the Kolyma camps, strictly defined, on the eve of the

war there were more than 100,000 detainees (this figure was widely repeated in 1944-54). On the basis of death rates estimated by former detainees, it is estimated that about 3 million people lost their lives in these camps during the 1930s.¹⁹

Anton Chikya speaking of the Kolyma gold mine and the conditions of their exploitation observed:

If American gold is washed by the blood of enslaved peoples, Soviet gold is washed in the blood of workers and peasants allegedly liberated.²⁰

The high mortality rate of camp inmates was due to living and working conditions that were extremely harsh, particularly because of the severe cold of the regions in which a large number of the camps were established. Detainees having learned of the existence of cremation ovens in Nazi camps called the Soviet farms "camps with no crematoria." More fatalities were due to the executions which experts carried out a detainee who strayed a few meters from the road that he was supposed to follow could be killed on the spot, and it a general way to bad treatment from the detainees' escorts. This bad treatment was fatal for the sick whose productivity was too low or who could not be locked after. The mortality was also large among those who were contagious or vulnerable to contagion by an epidemic, and epidemics were frequent among undernourished detainees. So Chernyshev quotes several examples of epidemics, notably that of an Asiatic type that could not be treated. It was eradicated in the following manner:

If one prisoner in a cell caught it, they just locked the cell and let an one out and passed them food only through the door till they all died.²¹

Bad murderous treatment was also inflicted upon those who did not succeed in producing enough, in the mind of the authorities usually because they were at the end of their strength. These were the "givers," that were exterminated by work. Here is how the latter were treated at Kolyma:

Multitudes of givers, unable to walk by themselves were dragged to work on sledges by other

"goners" who had not yet become quite so weak those who lagged behind were beaten with clubs and torn by dogs. Working in 50° degrees below zero Fahrenheit they were forbidden to build fires and warm themselves. Those who did not fulfill the norm were punished in this way in winter or he ordered them to strip naked in the mine shaft, poured cold water over them, and in this state they had to run to the compound.⁴²

In other cases those who did not fulfill the norms were shut in an isolator without window bed, and heating after some days at the end of their strength they were piled in and shut up inside a cart that was left exposed to the cold. In that way they died it was only necessary to throw out their bodies the snow would inter them.⁴³ It really was the white crematorium. Obviously it is impossible to estimate the number of victims of such treatment.

(b) The executions

To these deaths should be added the numerous executions more organized but whose scale is no easier to estimate. Certainly some of these executions but a minority, were officially known. Those were the people condemned by public trials or even secret trials whose sentences were published (like the cases mentioned previously of the Red Army officers executed in 1937). Other executions took place without being made public following decisions by the judicial or security organs, such was the case of NKVD prisoners who were executed with a bullet in the back of the neck, in the courtyards or cellars of NKVD prisons. These individual executions were very numerous as is testified consistently by detainees of the time who have since been deported but it is impossible to know the true dimension of this. Finally there were mass executions, usually fixed by administrative order, the latter seemed to have been above all those who had been officially sentenced to 20 years detention without rights of commutation.⁴⁴ According to R. Conquest for the years 1946-38

there were 500,000 legal executions and 3,000 illegal ones according to R. Nisbett by January 1939 (these were 400,000 to 500,000 secret arrests). The figures cannot be reckoned although it is estimated to hundreds of thousands.

In any case there are several material proofs which took place during these years, and then the signing of the German-Soviet Pact which 'clarified' the situation. Poland and Bessarabia were occupied; these populations and the occupied countries had to pay. Among the proofs of these crimes one should note the mass burial grounds discovered by the Germans in occupied war regions of the Soviet Union. In the burial ground found at Vinnitsa in the Ukraine alone there were more than 9,000 bodies. They used to have been killed in 1938 and a certain number had been identified by their families. The burial grounds exist because the own population had heard talk of the internal and external commissions of inquiry, and the existence of other burial grounds at Frunze and Sochi.

However the size of these mass execution grounds is the great majority of those who perished in the camps the terror were not executed but were put to death, starved because of the extremely harsh living and working conditions which prevented. However the statistics of the years' extermination prove. Like the German Nazis a great number of deaths was due essentially to simple men - authoritaries of justice in the provinces, especially long working days which were usually over 10 hours, very heavy tasks, health services hardly existed, and the system which turned everybody into the killer of the labour force, the killed did not succeed in taking revenge. All these testify to the extreme severity shown towards the dead as of those shown by the authorities.

(c) A demographic balance in outline

Repression and mass terror in various forms (liquidation, deportation and high mortality in the camps - punitive fatalities)*

The famine had repercussions on the demographic situation which was also affected by the entry of the Red Army, the separation of families, and by the increase in mortality associated with the general deterioration of living conditions.

Analyses of population statistics which show that from 10 to 14.5 million between 1926 and 1939 a growth of 4.5 million does not tell the full extent of the catastrophe, since it is not on that the repression will come to be measured.

It is not a matter here of counting the dead, but rather of measuring at what times "We shall have to count."

The conclusion of recent work by Marc Chappuis in his report is an evaluation of the consequences of the famine and repression and makes a comparison between the two sources of excess mortality:

Analyzing the official statistics Marc Chappuis estimates that between 1921 and 1939 the long-term average number of Soviet population reached 73 million, so that the number of pre-birth children who died of hunger, the excess mortality of children, in the years 1932 to 1934 is estimated to be 1.5 million.

It should be added that the same author estimates that 1.5 million children suffered from 1919 to 1921 and which were to be associated with peasant aggression. The result of the repression and terror of the Stalinist period reached a total about 3.5 million. These figures are compared with those of a previous estimate by the same author of 5 million newborn children from 1919 to 1921.

In reality the difference in the disappearance of the population of towns and of the peasantry is enormous. The most important factor is that the death rate of the rural population is brought about by the depopulation of the countryside of men and women of child-bearing age.

At this point we can turn to another tragic catastrophe.

III The dynamics of repression and terror, and the "requirements" of the economy

Mass repression and terror developed under pressure from numerous elements which produced an immense social

contradictory effects. The divisive elements were present, but the main element was the struggle of the leading group to strengthen its power.

From a historical point of view in the USSR the first effect was the unleashing of mass repression and terror from the center of organization from above. The latter could only have been organized by these methods and its principal objective was to force the submission of the working class to an unprecedented degree, extending beyond the factory equally demanded the use of mass repression and terror. The same methods were put into operation by the leading group up to annihilate the remaining opposition and expelling classes to oppose the challenge for power of the privileged social strata to destroy all opposition and all thought in the party and to defend its own unity.

This putting into operation of mass repression and terror tended to be self-amplifying, by reason of its own dynamics. In fact it aroused among the leaders who had reinforced their fear of revolt, and this led them to accentuate the repression. The remarks made by Marx and Engels about the Jacobins during the 1793 Terror are absolutely valid here. They often emphasize in fact, that terror was largely the result of the power itself in the sense that it is a form of power exercised by people who are fearful. Thus Engels wrote in a letter to Marx on September 4, 1840:

Terror is above all useless strictures carried out by people who are themselves frightened and who in this way wish to calm themselves.²⁴

In this sense the very development of repression and terror on a large scale of trials, executions and deportations tended to punish acts of sabotage, treason, spying, the already imaginatively created an atmosphere which intimidated the leaders themselves. The latter ended by seeing threats everywhere they were themselves terrorist and demanded that the security services were more and more vigilant and active.²⁵

Keeping in mind concrete circumstances, the thesis of Hannah Arendt that totalitarian terror is launched when

the totalitarian leader knows that he has no longer any need to be frightened & would seem to contradict the former. In reality the anti-peasant letter was known and most peasants in fact it is true that they did not even when the latter were threatened but the starting point was probably the fear initially experienced by the authorities. In this case the letter which from 1945 struck the fears of those who had shown lawlessness between 1945 and 1948 which would go purely and simply against the leaders of the leading group and who even tried to redouble its power there again fear of punishment to develop when in actuality no change had become impossible but the experience of the leading group of the resistance factors was so strong that imaginary dangers contributed to the development of a developing.

The self-propulsion of the letter was due to the same elements as before that those who were in charge of the counter-operation of the members of the NVA and their organizations were frightened of being accused of lawlessness and crime towards the enemies and that the old set of revolutionaries who had been reformed from after the end of the shadow of the Augusto Pinochet coup. From this point the letter was also passed through the hands of the NVA and escaped the first seven September. In these circumstances the NVA steered a difficult path as the party's position was also prepared now over the liberating front. There was still some rest of a rest of a number of the leftists who in general continuity was held out in touch with an older generation. Another if the authorities had only put in contact would have entrained a somewhat development of implementation of the letter. The dynamics of the letter were always in the hands of the leaders who wished to provide an outlet for the fear of the workers. The leaders who took on the beginning of the movement and later served as managers the leading group categorized them as responsible for a social and economic situation which was interpreted by the population during the coup to have been caused by the destruction of the workers and to observe its own power the destruction of the workers and to observe its own power.

The development of the letter followed a common scheme which originated in our culture which can be seen

the intentions of those who had been led to believe it was in action the repression and terror machine could grab many more men and women than had been at first anticipated, thus being of perverse political and economic effects as well.

However, the dynamics of repression and terror was not only political it was also economic by mobilizing vast amounts of penal or concentration-camp labor mass repression and terror entered into a development which partly relied on the use of non-free workers whose place of residence conditions and nature of work were fixed in an entirely authoritarian fashion by those who employed them. Thus it appeared, on large scale a specific type of exploitation that often reduced it a sort of state slavery subject to the domination of those who directed the work processes who even assigned them to a rapid death.

The specific type of exploitation was at first based upon the accelerated primitive accumulation which characterized the Soviet economy of the 1920s. To the extent that it was sound it was typical to the Soviet system the development of capitalism was accompanied by slave workers, prison and forced labor demonstrated by the slave trade of millions of black slaves employed in the plantations of America (North Central and South), the reduction to slavery of the American Indians especially in Central America, condemned to work and die in the mines and the conscription throughout the 19th century of Indian Chinese and Vietnamese workers freely and obliged to work until death for their employers. As a matter of fact were these owners found in Russia as in Central and South America but also in North America. What was particular in the Soviet Union was that the state, through its police organs was the employer of workers subjected to this forced labor and that the latter were not recruited beyond the frontiers but in the country itself by judicial and administrative means.

However in the Soviet Union this form of exploitation has another peculiarity it did not disappear when the capitalist phase of accumulation in the 1930s was finished. In the 1950s the number of workers in the camps and rural colonies seems to have been even higher than during the years 1937-38. It is known that these workers came mostly from Poland and the

United States. Then at the end of the war they were above all former Soviet prisoners and deportees coming from the German camps. These escaped the Nazi camps only to find themselves in the camps of their own country. Even after 1945 when the Nazi excesses had been condemned, the labour camps continued to operate. According to Kroun Brusov, there were, at the beginning of the 1960s three million detainees in the Soviet camps. The vast majority of these were those deported under common law, the number of prisoners who had been deported as political being only about 6000.⁵⁵

The scale of the concentration camp work, its nature and its persistence suggests that this form of exploitation does not only the political opponents but also a long-term economic loss. It is often damage temporarily made to come to fruition that the system did not bring to a standstill. This was also to a large extent the case with the Chinese when he was in the present Soviet system and it could be argued quite similar to that which Marx described in his analysis of the eighteenth century 'petty bourgeois' in which the role of despots as played by the Party bosses as its object not preserving and nurturing relationships but carrying out a policy of self-interest. In this view of things work at the camps was only the extreme than bestiality of the despotism to which the workers were subjected. According to Marx the main form of despotism in the past had always rested on it's wide being from the upper bourgeoisie of the times until the practice of Lenin as Party leader and as head of state.⁵⁶

Such a description of Soviet reality is essentially metaphoric rather than analytical. It fails to hide the material production relationships and to reduce exploitation to a 'political phenomenon' a particular form of the political distribution of power.⁵⁷

This description obscures the actual difference which exists between the situation of the great mass of Soviet wage earners and that of the camp workers. Also it does not allow a grasp of the difference of situation between these workers and those who used to forced labor in what Marx called 'mental despotism'. In fact in the latter case not in the persons allotted to forced labor were usually there not only relatively short periods

and was often provided their own subsistence and remained within the social relationships that allowed the reconstitution of their labor force. On the contrary, the workers in Soviet camps were cut off from the rest of the world. They depended on their guardians for subsistence and a large proportion of them died in the camps without leaving any descendants apart from the children that they had before their internment.

In fact the work of those in Soviet camps constitutes a form of exploitation *sursumoris*. One could say, also in a metaphorical way, that this form of exploitation constituted a sort of *slavery*. However, this term is equally misleading for slaves reproduced themselves and were usually liable to be bought and sold. So finally one has to acknowledge that his type of exploitation is not definable in terms of any other and must be described as '*concentrated on-camp labor*'.

Assuming this is agreed the question remains to what economic 'requirements' were the development and reproduction of this type labor subordinated?

(a) The 'requirements' of the economic administration

At the most immediately empirical level this type of work was firstly the result of mass repression and terror. On the one hand the existence of millions of deportees and prisoners meant the establishment of an economic administration managed by the repressive organs whose job it was to put the detainees to work. (In the other hand since this administration had been set up it was a fixed production plan that it had to carry out to succeed until it had to ensure a sufficient supply of detainees which was facilitated by the fact that the NKVD was responsible simultaneously for the management of the camps and for arrests. Thus a connection was established between the extension of repression and terror and the 'projective' of the economic administration of the camp system itself.)

The existence of production plans allotted to the repressive organs and plans concerning the number of detainees is an undeniable fact. Certain of these plans have been published in others (although secret) reached "western" countries such

as the detailed economic plan for 1941 of which we have already spoken. This source has given rise to very different estimates of the labor force employed by the NKVD.²³ The estimates of N. Janov brought him to figure of 3.5 million for the number of detainees occupied with production tasks in 1941. Other calculations show that within a total gross investment program in 1941 of 37.65 billion rubles the NKVD had 6.81 billion (which corresponds to more than 18 percent of gross investment).²⁴

The existence of production plans that had to be realized with the help of concentration-camp labor led to the informal existence of "arrest plans." Many eye-witnesses confirmed this.

For 1943 the Yugoslav communist A. Crnja, then head of the main prison of Irkutsk, noted that one of the main functions of this prison "was the transfer of prisoners to the Far East. He adds that the number of those who were thus despatched 'depended on the telegrams received from the caring centers'. Some years later A. Solzhenitsyn in his book remarked that the 'real law' of the arrests was nothing but 'planning' which fixed the figures to be reached."²⁵ This 'planning' was not exempt from improvisation as was seen in 1937-40.²⁶

Although a large number of eye-witness confirm that the size of the camp labor force was largely subject to the requirements of the 'economic management' of the camp, it is still true that the latter did not constitute an end in itself and it is therefore necessary to ask what were the imperatives to which it was itself obedient. One of these imperatives was obviously that of production growth or at least the growth of certain outputs.

D) Camp labor and production logic

On base of insufficient information it is impossible to estimate with any precision the contribution made by concentration-camp labor (either penal or general) to production especially in those sectors where its role was significant, such as construction, mining, forestry etc. However it is known that this

contribution was considerable since it rested on the efforts of millions of men whose work was directed and managed by an administration divided into many main departments equivalent to real ministries: the Directorate for Timber, Directorate for Camps in mining, metallurgy, etc.

The detainees built thousands of kilometers of railroads and substantially participated in the construction industry, combines ports and bear towns in the transport of tons of timber destined for export or internal consumption and in mining for rare metals, gold, mercury, etc.⁶⁹

Nevertheless, recognizing the scale of the work accomplished with the aid of camp labor is not enough to evaluate the size of that labor. Certain writers consider that this is a very decisive factor, for example, in a recent article S. Rosefield estimates that in 1939 the zeks numbered from 1.5 to 10.4 million.⁷⁰

In my opinion such an estimate like some others (and similar) overestimates the overall economic role of camp labor in economic and industrial development in the USSR during the 1930s. As is pointed out by R.W. Davies and S.G. Whealcraft, if the methods and the data of Rosefield are used the conclusion must be that in 1941 camp personnel produced more than 60 percent of all industrial production and construction⁷¹ which is in contradiction with many statistical data, including that of the 1941 plan mentioned above.

As have already said, it seems reasonable to acknowledge that the number of camp workers was a maximum of about 1.5 million toward the late 1930s. It would then represent in 1937 and 1940 respectively 34 and 31 percent of the workers employed in industrial enterprises (construction, forestry, transport,) which in itself is a considerable proportion.

Many figures show that the labor productivity of camp workers was lower than that of "free workers," consequently the contribution of this work to production in the branches under consideration must be somewhat less than 30 percent, although nevertheless representing a very high percentage.

However, the commission of the authorities in these economic requirements produced perverse effects. One of them, as we have seen, was the enormous mortality among camp labor.

camp workers this mortality reduced the labour power potential and the labor force available to the Soviet Union.

Another perverse effect of the development of camp labor was the low productivity of this latter. This in general transforms a 'free' worker into a paid worker but to a reduction of production rather than an increase. However this situation does not mean that recourse to camp labor is not always a clear economic logic - two aspects of which must be explained. One was the minimal monetary cost of camp labor forces which did not receive wages or only very slight wages and from this it follows that despite the low productivity there was high exploitation rate. The other was the very great mobility of the zek whose labor could easily be subjected to the most tasks chosen by the authorities. In this regard camp labor had the 'advantage' of being more strictly subjected than any other to the 'economic logic' of priorities and of exploitation.

(c) The "economic logic" of priorities and of exploitation

The industrialization policy as it was pursued largely in the 1930s, gave priority to accumulation and to those industries whose products would contribute as directly as possible to the increase of accumulation. This priority meant that it was considered relatively unimportant that the productivity of the zek employed in the mines, forests or construction sites was less than that of the same men employed freely in other sectors like agriculture for example. In fact the economic logic of the authorities impelled them to try to obtain above all the increase of certain products like gold, coal, rare metals, timber etc and to give priority to the construction of steel and industrial sites certain raw materials and relative energies were deemed indispensable for economic and industrial development as a whole. In these circumstances it was of little importance that the decisions taken toward these priorities entailed a relative lowering of the average social productivity of labor and a general decline in the living conditions of workers.

In certain cases, the priorities thus imposed were able thanks to camp labor to play an effective role in the growth of

wastement (for example, the extraction of gold from the Urals); and the purchase abroad of important industrial equipment). In other cases the role of these projects was even dubious, for what was gained was often甚麼 (for example the White Sea Canal took six months of work and certain items of equipment imported in exchange for products obtained through zek's labour were quickly put aside or badly utilized, sometimes even left to rust); and the construction of the factories which were to use them was itself finished. However, these wastages although frequent were not foreseen by the authorities so from the point of view of their economic logic it could seem that they gave priority development to activities that showed a tendency to be immature and to avoid in the necessary way of using workers whatever might be the cost in relation to loss of productivity. In any case, the wastage of labor and inaccurate forecasts were largely felt outside the areas of which I have said more in the fourth part of this article; however, the wastage did not include the same costs of human life.

I should be added that to develop or wages basis the same activities as those which were developed on the basis of piece-labor it would have been necessary, to grant to the free workers attached to these activities wages much higher than those paid in the more agrarian regions and it would have been necessary to guarantee working and living conditions much more acceptable than those inflicted on the seafarers or nothing would have persuaded them to go to work in sufficient numbers in Siberia and in the extreme east and north of the country. However, such a policy of wages and investments in housing would have been in complete contradiction with the priority given to accumulation. I would have demanded moreover that in order that the higher wages thereby paid could be exchanged for products the production of consumer goods be rapidly developed, this was totally incompatible with the priority given to accumulation. And, taking into account the volume of out-of-area available population it would have been necessary in order to attract workers to move rates towards the level at least to lower still further the real wages of free workers in the western regions of the USSR.

which politically would have been very difficult. So, to the same we must add that camp labor was not only well organized, but also became the backbone of the system, as far as it had not yet become the dominant factor of a new class of representatives of the CCP.¹⁷²⁴

From the point of view of the advantages of camp labor, the following argument which allows it to be profitable even if its cost is relatively weak.¹⁷²⁵ The profitability of this work moreover was even greater in that it allowed economy to make a use of expensive machinery in those areas where it was installed. Obviously these observations should not蒙蔽 us to the point that the development of camp labor served a kind of economic calculation. However this development was accompanied by a dynamic which showed essential social problems and ideological elements whose effects were far from being neutral. At the same time the authorities were aware of the abuses of camp labor and of labor press left by men and women who were underpaid and whose rights had been reduced to a minimum.

In the USSR in the 1930s camp labor was not only intended to provide an enormous surplus labor force, it was also intended to produce an effect of terror and thereby contribute to the enlarged reproduction of exploitation relations which characterized the whole of Soviet society.

The role of camp labor in the reproduction of the Soviet social and political system evidently diminishes today although the camp labor affects a lesser number of people than in the 1930s. Its role in the production of surplus value however remains considerable for the wages paid to detainees are minimal about 4-5 percent of the wages of a free worker (the detainees being housed and fed). These detainees take part in almost all productive activities (not only in plants and mobile spare parts factories, clothing and obviously timber). Arrests continue to take place according to a main criterion: to the requirements of production.¹⁷²⁶ Part of these psychiatric hospitals are subjected to the same exploitation. The role of women in the camp labor nowadays is especially great.¹⁷²⁷ Bearing in mind all these points it may be said that other camps form a subsystem fulfiling important factors of integration and regulation in the Soviet economy and society.¹⁷²⁸

To summarize, the development of mass repression did not
was tightly bound to the policy followed by the leadership,
a policy aiming to impose dictatorial power over the workers,
peasants, and cadres. This policy was also bound up with
production which took place on a large scale and which
reflected the country to the demands of maximum accumulation.
Between 1929 and 1953 it cost the Soviet Union demographic
losses which exceeded 20 million people losses which were
more were higher than those suffered during World War I.
policy passed through the camps tens of millions of men and
women. The significance of the economic and political crisis
of the 1930s is fully apparent when one analyses the logic
of accumulation and the crisis in the Soviet economy.

Notes

- 1 E. Ginzburg, *Into the Whirlwind*, p. 131
- 2 E. Ginzburg cites the case of a peasant woman thus sentenced without knowing what Trotskyism was believed that she had been punished for being a traitor to the having confused the latter word which she混了 with Trotskyism (see above p. 198).
- 3 See S. Bialer, *Stalin's Successors*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1980) pp. 11-12.
- 4 These methods have often been described. For example by K. Kaplan in Vol. 1 of *The Gulag Archipelago*. Also K. Kaplan's *Prisoners of Prague* being based on archive documents permits a close up look at all these methods. Kaplan shows that as had happened that certain detained Party members had agreed to self accuse and thereby they were doing the Party a "service."
- 5 Not all those subjected to these methods gave in. According to the resistance to these pressures could mean a prison sentence of sometimes a less severe punishment such was "I have been brought to a session." Such sentences were pronounced by the NKVD or by the NKVD or by courts in closed sessions.
- 6 This is a concept which A. Zemcov emphasizes in his various books especially in *The Yawning Depths* (New York 1979) and *Le Gouvernement communiste russe* (Paris 1981). At different times this populism corresponded with a certain popularity of Stalin which encouraged a measure of arbitrariness (see the same author's article on Stalinism which appeared in *British in Culture*, Issues v. 1980, p. 83. see by A. Smith in *Russia & the Revolution*, (London, 1981), pp. 404-5)
- 7 M. Fainberg in *Sovietok* notes on several occasions that these archives though extremely rich in information give no coherent information

about the number of victims of the repression. The best figures that I appear to have collected, it would seem, are those given in statistics on the execution of political犯 in the central departments of the NKVD.¹ Among the works that estimate the number of victims of the repression and the population of the camps or the number arrested in general there should be cited apart from Conquest's book the following: A. A. Tikhonov, *State and the Soviet Government Party*, Moscow 1950; G. L. and R. N. Kozhevnikov, *Arrests in the Soviet Union*, 1921-1950; P. M. Schubert, *Herrschaft und Klassen in der Sowjetunion*, Berlin 1951; R. Schucht, *A critique of Soviet Statistics of Soviet Economic Statistics in favour of Trotskyist statistics*, 1951, pp. 30-41; M. Laskin, *Labour and Repression*, 1951, a contribution to the *Journal of History of Communism*, No. 1, 1951, pp. 16-22; R. Tucker and S. Cutler, eds., *The Soviet Purge 1934-1953*, 1953; A. Solzhenitsyn, *Cancer & Resistance. An assessment of the sources and uses of data based about 1929-1953*, in *Soviet Studies*, January 1958; P. Vilen, *Principals established draft basis of the consideration of Soviet State and Labour*, 1959 (unpublished manuscript); N. Wheatcroft.

- 9 One of the more recent and weighty critical examinations of these estimates is the article by N. Wheatcroft, *Opinions*.
- 10 Quoted by Dallin and McLean, *Soviet Justice*, p. 12.
- 11 See above, p. 183.
- 12 See for his point Vol. 3 of this work, esp. 1924-1925 and the reference made there to the central publications of the Central Committee of the NKVD, No. 46-47, 1926. The decree of March 16 is quoted in A. Solzhenitsyn, *Principals established draft basis of the consideration of Soviet State and Labour*, p. 21 which refers to TASS, No. 10, 1951, pp. 61, 72.
- 13 Solzhenitsyn, *Gulag*, Vol. 2, p. 91.
- 14 See for example the article of I. Sushkov in *Sovietische Geschichte*, No. 14, December 1931.
- 15 See a quotation from E. Mikhaylov's *Review* in Solzhenitsyn, Vol. 2, p. 59.
- 16 *Repressions in Soviet Russia and their Victims*, Moscow 1955.
- 17 See also the *correlate anti-Siberian*, vol. 2, pp. 500-12 quoted from T. Cliff, *Russia*, p. 31.
- 18 Vagoda born in 1901 joined the Bolshevik Party in 1917. As a member of the Party, a member of its apparatus in 1927, he was given the responsibility as in the Stalin letter in the GPU. He was tried for NKVD crimes in 1937 at a Moscow court under the name of the first *Central Trial*. His trial which in view of the NKVD may have been against his wife who was accused of participation in repression against Party members. Vagoda had apparently complained of repression against Party members. Vagoda had apparently complained of repression against Party members. Vagoda had apparently complained of repression against Party members. Thus from September 26 he was tried to put a scale on this repression. Thus from September 26 he was believed of the NKVD to be 1951 known that Vagoda approached him to be having caused four years' death in the Party purge. When after his being released four years later in the Party purge when after his being released from the NKVD he was arrested in return to the beginning of 1951 he was tried and sentenced at the same time as Bulganin as a member of the anti-Soviet bloc of rightists and traitors etc.

18. Leader born in 1903 joined the Bolshevik Party in 1920. At the 1922 Congress he played a relatively unimportant role. From 1923 he was placed in charge of the cadre section of the secretariat, which was responsible for the Organization Bureau and for the Central Party and Disciplinary Commission, charged with reorganizing the Party. In September 1936 he replaced Yagoda as head of the secretariat. Following his return from Moscow in December 1939 he held a senior post and then "disappeared" in 1940.
19. Born 1900 in Leningrad joined the Bolshevik Party in 1917 and held posts in the Cheka and then the GPU. He entered the Komsomol in 1921, became candidate member the Pskobum, then member of the Central Committee during the war. In 1936 he was transferred to the NKVD and became deputy chairman in 1938. After the 1939 German invasion he arrested in July 1941. According to the NKVD he had been tried in a closed court and shot in December.
20. On these various points see Le Procès des 40, *Le Monde entier*, Paris 1951; D. Runciman, *La mort de Staline*, Paris 1952; G. Léonard, *Le Complot Staline*, Paris 1953; *Le Monde*, 1st Trimester 1970 pp 10-11 and the several items on the same trilogy.
21. A. Ciliga, *Dix Ans*, p. 235.
22. See above, p. 235.
23. The strong word *cler* has a distinctive character. This was first used by L. Foa in *Le Siècle au XX^e*, Paris 1951.
24. See Lissak and Nicolsky, *Forced Labour*.
25. S. Wheelwright, "On assessing," p. 267.
26. Major *reassessments* prepared respectively by NKVD and NKWD.
27. S. Wheelwright, "On assessing," p. 266.
28. The secret or unsecret plan of 1941 was a document drafted by the NKVD in its advance into the USSR. It was later seized by the NKVD and then published in a photographic reproduction in the NKVD's *Pravda* (1946) *Commissarovsky plan razvedki i razvedchikov* (intelligence service) no. 1941. There are numerous claims it could be genuine. Both I am sceptical but the situation is complex. As we have already seen it makes the jump from knowledge to judgment on the basis of what one claims. No one source has given a definite and very different estimates of the labor force employed in the Gulags over a long period. See Schmied, *Soviet Gulag: The First Five Years* (September 1973), pp. 100-102; N. Lewis, *Labour and Death in Soviet Russia* (1974); J. Fairbank, *A History of Modern Russia* (1978), pp. 10-11.
29. There is an excellent general introduction to Kirov's project in G. G. Krushchev, *The Great Terror* (1961) pp. 249ff.
30. Executive Order 10-1937 signed by T. G. Gorbachev, p. 10.
31. Numerous testimonies of former deportees confirm these figures which moreover may be low at this date. See also D. H. S. Scott, *Stalin and The Great Terror* pp. 359-80.
32. For these deportations see M. Lewin, *Russia's Gulag* (pp. 405-516) also the second part of Vol. 1 and the last part of Vol. 2 of the present work.

4. See J. Rennick, *The Party and the People*, p. 154.
5. For the repression of children and youth see Solntseva, *ibid.* vol. 2, pp. 44-51, also the book by M. Zaitsev already mentioned above, the following note:
6. R. Conquest, *The Great Terror*, p. 142.
7. It has been estimated that one worker died for every 100000 and in the construction of these railroads (see D. Russell, *ibid.* vol. 1, p. 44).
8. For the Kolyma camp see Shavrov's *Rechts der Kugel* (1970), a first account of concentration camp life.
9. See especially R. Conquest, *Kolyma - The Arctic Death Camp* (London 1978).
10. A. Orlitz, *Dix Ans*, p. 336.
11. *Gulag*, Vol. 2, p. 52.
12. See above, pp. 126-27.
13. See above, p. 128.
14. R. Conquest, *The Great Terror*, pp. 527-28. This author quotes a former NKVD official who spoke of two million executions between 1929 and 1938, and mentions a speech by a Yugoslav leader (of August 6, 1941) which mentioned three million killed between 1936 and 1938.
15. R. Medvedev, *Let History Judge*, p. 10 according to his author, the prison executions reached a thousand-fold increase per year in Moscow alone.
16. On these aspects of mass terror and mass torture see *Bulatov's Testimony* (vol. 1 January 1964) of the witness before the Institute of State's Crimes quoted by R. Conquest, *The Great Terror*, pp. 484-85 and 724-25. Conquer also quotes at various places in his *Great Terror* these last arguments.
17. It would be noted that these after were used selectively - not only against the peasants in general, but more specially against certain kulaks and others. According to L. Plyushch in *Histories of Soviet Russia* (Adult Books, New York 1970) five million Ukrainians died as a result of the 1933 famine.
18. Among the older analyses I would mention, especially the works of F. Lorimer and especially his *The Population of the Soviet Union. History and Prospects* (Genova, 1946); W. Eason, *Population and Labour Force in Soviet Economic Growth*. A. Bergson, ed. (Evanston 1953), pp. 101ff; N. Prokopenko, *Historia demografique de l'URSS* (Paris 1965), especially pp. 53 and 65. The main Soviet sources used by these authors were *Vsesoyuznaya perepis naseleniya 1926 goda* (Moscow 1931), *Izbrannye Vsesoyuznye perepisi naseleniya 1926 g. i 1930 g.* No. 12, 14, 16, 17, *Vsesoyuznaya perepis naseleniya 1937 g.* in *Tr. No. 12, 14, 16, 17, Sotsiologicheskii issledovatel'nyi SSSR* (Moscow 1939) and *Pravda* March 2, 1939, June 27, 1939, and November 7, 1939. The 1939 census (published 1940) added much new data about the 1939 demographic situation.
19. See Makogonov's article *Portes subtiles pour la population de l'URSS 1918-1958* in *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique* July-September 1977, pp. 2-3-65.
20. In the article quoted above the term *krasnye kresty* (red crosses) refers to the appearance theme which took place before the time of natural death.

because of repression or of any other cause in excess that
implies, for example, the term therefore excludes the effects of a
low birthrate.

51 See above, p. 235.

52 See above, p. 243.

53 These various points will be developed in Vol. 4 of this work.

54 MSW Vol. 33, p. 53.

55 This is not to say that all the other factors which
the author has chosen to describe in this article do not also
contribute to what I am calling 'repression' but rather that
the approach used here is to change the focus from
the political and social causes of the birthrate to the
more elusive factor of human behavior itself. p. 4
at note 13. In this case, it can be said
immediately, we can suppose that the cause of the
decrease in a state, but the cause of the increase is not
complicated (modern Iran is an example).

56 See Max Horkheimer, *The Dialectic of Culture*, trans. by T. Bottomore, New York, 1947.

57 See A. J. Tozer, *Party Theory and Soviet Politics*, Cambridge, 1957; and the report of the Soviet Central Statistical Bureau, *Soviet Statistics* (New York, 1977), p. 204.

58 See L. Coubertin's discussion in *Discours sur l'éducation physique* (Paris, 1904), p. 51.

59 For the influence set by these comments see M. G. Korchagin, *Pravda*, 1934, No. 1, and other publications. From 1934 to 1937, for example, messages directed at
production by Marx, Engels, and Lenin.

60 M. Korchagin, *Pravda*, 1934, No. 51, 1934 and especially

pp. 102 and 108.

61 See above, p. 43. For a more detailed account of this aspect of
the 1930s, see A. G. Smith, *State Control of Sport in the Soviet Union*, London, 1948.

62 It is interesting to note that during the period of the Stalinist regime, the birth rate increased between 1930 and 1940, while the death rate fell. But the birth rate did not increase in the first years of the war, although the USSR had to build up its manpower, though it was apparently not able to do so. The reason may be that the birth rate after the initial increase was still below the death rate. This is demonstrated by the following figures taken from the Soviet Statistical Yearbook, 1940, pp. 104-105:

63 For example, see N. S. Khrushchev, *Meeting with Students and Young Scientists and Engineers*.

64 See *Pravda*, 1941, October 1, p. 194; 1942, March 28, p. 194; April 1952, especially pp. 388-89.

65 A. George, *The Russian Enigma*, p. 351.

66 A. N. Slobodcikov, *Contemporary Soviet Society*, London, 1958, p. 10.

- *Sovietica* Vol. 2 pp. 148-50
- 64 A journalist of these activities is in Vol. 2 of *Gesag* (pp. 30-3)
- 65 S. Rosefield 'An assessment of the Bureau' p. 65
- 66 R. Davies and S. Wheatcroft 'Stalin, Roosevelt & Churchill' in *Soviet Review* December 1980, p. 598
- V. Kh., 1958g pp. 658-58
- 67 Those who put the disappearance of unemployment among the assets of the Soviet policy might be surprised that the part played by those who instead of being wage earners entered the camps is even more greater than that of the unemployed victims of the USSR and western Europe in the 1930s.
- 68 On this point see the article in the December 1980 issue of *Soviet Review* by R. Davies and S. Wheatcroft and that of the latter in *Soviet Studies* April 1981)
- 69 See A. Glucksmann *La Cité ouverte et le Ménager d'hommes* Paris 1976 p. 128
- 70 This does not mean that in certain cases the use of concentrations camp labor was carried on in such bad conditions that it could not be profitable. (See the example in Solzhenitsyn's *Gesag* Vol. 2 pp. 580-87 but these cases were exceptional. In many terms the economic balance in these camps was globally positive although they were disastrous from the point of view of human life but this point of view is foreign to the "logic" that the authorities followed)
- 71 K. Lioubarsk, 'Un palliatif au manque de main d'œuvre et à la faible productivité travail/retravail lors des camps' in *Chroniques des petites gens d'URSS*, pp. 63-64
- 72 See above, p. 65.
- 73 See *Femmes et Russie* 1980 Paris, Editions des Femmes (480)
- 74 R. Brunet 'Géographie du *Gesag*' in *L'Espace géographique* No. 3 1981, pp. 2, 5 f.

PART 4

Capital and its Crises

The dominant aspect of the development process of production forces during the 1930s in the Soviet Union was industrialization. The latter benefited from maximum investment. The working class grew at an exceptional speed. Soviet industry experienced a particularly fast expansion.

Although there is no doubt that official statistics relating to global industrial production have a tendency to inflate the size of the results obtained, and although this inflation is due simultaneously to the way in which the statistics were calculated and to the way in which the basic data were collected, it is nevertheless true that in the 1930s there was a real "industrial revolution" on a scale without historical precedent, but which has since had equivalents, particularly in Japan.

The index of industrial production revised by Hesterman (which seems especially typical) moves from a base of 100 in 1928 to 371 in 1937 and 430 in 1940.¹ Other calculations present a picture of an industrial growth a little less rapid, but which nevertheless was remarkable.²

The exceptional performances however should not put us to thinking the state institutions in which they were achieved nor must they hide the fact that according to the official statistics themselves, the rate of development of industrial production fell from one Five Year plan to the next.³

The fall of the industrial production growth rate can not be separated from another very significant fact: the weak growth rate of industrial labor productivity, which contrasts with the scale of technical change that was accomplished.⁴

The low growth of labor productivity, the progressive fall of growth rates for industrial production and above all the crises that the Soviet economy experienced are manifestations of the limits of the successes brought by the industrialization of

the USSR. And this is not the only thing, for the beginning stages of this industrialization were accompanied, as has been shown in this volume, by a serious decline in the living standards of the masses and by recourse on a large scale to penal labor.

Notes

1. This problem has been studied by many writers. These include especially D. Hodgman, *Soviet Industrial Production, 1928-1951* (Cambridge, Mass., 1954); A. Bergson, *Soviet Economic Growth* (Princeton, 1955), the part devoted to the USSR in *Capital Formation and Economic Development* (Princeton, 1955).
2. In fact if one takes into account technical progress and productivity, Japan, the latter's industry has performed considerably better than Soviet industry did.
3. D. Hodgman, *Soviet Industrial Production*, p. 69.
4. The diversity of recent estimations of Soviet industrial production growth with copious references, can be seen in *Slavic Review* December 1980, with its articles by S. Rosefield, H. Kipnis, R. W. Davies, & Wheatcroft.
5. On this point see M. Lewin, "The Disappearance of Planning in the Plan," *Slavic Review* June 1973, p. 281. According to official statistics annual industrial growth rates for each of the three first plans were respectively 19.2, 17.1, and 13.2 percent, the latter covering the first three and half years of the plan. Of course if the elements of overestimation included in the official figures are removed the growth rates appear weaker. Thus N. Kaplan has calculated that for 1933-40 the average annual rate of industrial production growth was 8.8 percent (see his "Retardation in Soviet Growth," in *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, August 1968, p. 217).
6. Thus, taking 1928 as 100, the index of daily productivity per head employed in main industry was 167 in 1940 (that is the same as in 1937, this index calculated by Hodgman in *Soviet Industrial Production*, p. 117).

Accumulation in 1928-40

BETWEEN 1928 and 1940 the Soviet Union experienced a gigantic accumulation of material resources devoted to industry, and especially to heavy industry.

One statistical index reflects the 'official' accounting for the material resource accumulation of the Soviet Union. This was the index expressing the volume growth of 'basic capital' (fixed capital) at the disposition of the productive and non-productive sectors. According to official statistics the 'value' (in "constant prices") of the 'basic capital' grew from an index of 100 in 1928 to 312 in 1940.¹

However, these figures have only a very limited significance. In fact when one compares them with other Soviet statistics, it is clear that they overestimate very much the growth of material resources accumulated during these years. This overestimation to a large extent resulted from the method used for the construction of this index, because:

1. The index does not take into account the greater part of the destruction of material resources suffered by the Soviet economy during the 1930s, especially the destruction that struck agriculture following forced 'collectivization'.² To this destruction should be added that connected with the abandonment of most equipment used by private industry and by artisans. In fact, from 1930, almost all this equipment was stopped, because it was usually of no use to the state's large-scale industry.

(2) The official index was calculated in 'comparable prices', which means that the investments towards the end of the period have had to be "deflated" in order to eliminate the influence of the price rise between 1928 and 1940. However, it would seem, that the size of this rise of prices was underestimated and therefore the coefficients of deflation that were adopted were too small.

(3) The capital invested continued to be valued at its original cost and therefore its value at the end of the period was not reduced to take into account the wear and tear of equipment.

Although the index, which claimed thus to "measure the accumulation of material resources in the period 1928-40 overestimates the net result, it all the same has the merit of giving an idea of the size of investment carried out during the three first five-year periods.

i. Investments made 1928-40

For the years 1928-37 an estimate of the value of fixed investment is as follows

Gross investment (1928-37)	
	(billion rubles in constant prices)
1928-32	67.2
1933-37	151.7

Although between 1937 and 1940 the growth of gross investment slackened, its value ("in constant prices") still grew in total, by 30 percent according to official statistics.⁴ Between 1928 and 1940 the growth of gross investment was exceptionally high, on the order of 14 per cent annually.⁵

According to official statistics the investments made during the two first Five-Year Plans and the three and one-half years of the Third Five-Year Plan were divided as follows:

*Distribution of gross investment (kolkhoz excluded)
during the first three Five-Year Plans**

(% of total gross investment)

Industry	41.5
Agriculture	8.0
Transport and communications	20.5
Housing (excluding individual construction)	11.5
Trade, communal enterprises, and scientific, cultural, educational and health institutions	18.5
Total	100.00

It can be seen that industry received more than two fifths of state investment while agriculture was reduced to a beggar's portion taking into account kolkhoz investments would not change this picture substantially. Housing construction was equally neglected.⁷ A very large proportion of investment went to heavy industry (Group A) and to transport and communication, within industry less than one sixth of investment was devoted to increasing the production potential of consumer goods (or Group B).

In general the enormous investment effort of these years which was a heavy burden on the real income of the population, therefore did very little to improve living conditions. The principal exception was the investment made for education and health. However, these investment above all benefited the urban population. Moreover access to better hospital services was reserved to those who were part of the managing apparatus, and their families.

H. The economic weight of investment

For most of the 1930s the rapid increase of investment did not bring the expected growth of total income and of production. In fact the brutal and (in practice) chaotic increase of gross accumulation resulted in a veritable *dislocation of production*.

especially in agriculture. This for several years entailed a decrease in the availability of consumer goods.

The "economic weight" of the rapid increase of accumulation is difficult to "measure." However, an idea can be gained by comparing the rate of investment recorded in 1928 with that recorded in 1937. Between these two years this rate passed from 7 percent to 21 percent of the national product¹ almost in nine years, which was an upheaval on an exceptional scale and it is understandable that it seriously disturbed the reproduction of the material and social conditions of production. The growth recorded for the rate of accumulation is in no relation with the putting into force of the first Five Year Plans.

Notes

1. Figures calculated from NKh. 1958g, p. 58.
2. For an estimate of the destruction of means of production in agriculture see N. Jasny in *Soviet Industrialization* (Chicago, 1961), pp. 81ff.
3. NKh... 1958g, p. 618.
4. See above.
5. The figures for gross investment evidently do not take into account "investment" accompanying the process of primitive accumulation Nor do they show fluctuations and regressions of investment which occurred during the crises, as will be seen.
6. Figures calculated from NKh 1958g, pp. 622-23. The investments of different years are valued in prices said to be "comparable."
7. From 1929 to the war, there were built about 140 million square meters of housing financed by the state or cooperative organizations (NKh 1958g, p. 636). During the same period the urban population grew by nearly one million, while part of the housing stock deteriorated, hence there was a serious decline in housing conditions, that became catastrophic (see A. Kopp, *L'Architecture*).
8. National product and investment are evaluated at factor cost by G. Grossman in his contribution to *Soviet Economic Growth* (ed. Bergson) p. 8.

The first Five-Year Plans

FROM the end of the 1920s, Soviet planning was an economic, social and political reality. Plans were elaborated, discussed, adjusted, applied. A large number of important economic decisions were based on them. The rhythm of development and the structure of the Soviet economy were undoubtedly influenced by the practice of planning. Nevertheless this statement must not lead to the conclusion that the Soviet economy was henceforth a "planned economy" in the sense that it was "controlled" or subjected to the plan. The existence of such a control was proclaimed by Soviet ideologues who talked specifically of the "planned economy" and favourably compared this with the "market economy". Examination of the real movement of industry and agriculture, and comparison of the plan objectives with actual economic development rejects (we shall come back to this) the myth of a Soviet planned economy. This myth nevertheless has had a long life: this is for various reasons, notably that the concept of the planned economy is bound to the fetish of state and plan which developed on the basis of the dominant social and political relationships in the USSR. It is also because, as we have already said, the existence of the plans had an effective (although not always anticipated) action on the real economic situation.

I. Contradictions between economic plans and real advance

Taking an overall view of the plans worked out between late 1920s and World War Two, it may be seen that this period can be divided into two sub periods: the first from 1927-1931 and the second from 1933 up to the war.

During the first sub period and especially up to 1931 the plans became more and more detached from reality. The First Five Year Plan was "revised upwards" in a drastic way without anything from the point of view of real possibilities justifying such a revision.¹

During the course of this first sub period (1927-31) the current economic policy passed through three phases.²

The first stage came to an end toward the end of 1930. It was characterized in particular by the vocal struggle against inflation and by the practice of inflation in reality. Thus while the monetary circulation was rapidly increasing it was being said that real wages would increase thanks to a lowering of industrial prices. At the beginning of 1930 a series of measures was taken which opened the way for a new wave of inflation. Control by the ruble (*chezzashchir*) was then practically abandoned and a "credit reform" authorized the banks to provide almost without control, enterprise bank accounts with the necessary money. Once again there arose an illusion about the possibility of immediately abandoning monetary accounting just as it was anticipated.³ Pravdalin then declared:

The system of credit fails and one can see the characteristics of the production and circulation process in physical terms.⁴

At the same period Stalin considered that with the elimination of NEP it would be possible to organize direct economy between town and country through the exchange of products without recourse to trade.⁵

At the end of 1930 a second phase began in which the accent was again put on <markism>. A resolution adopted by the Plenum of December 1930 called for the strictest financial discipline and for the strengthening of the ruble. This record

phase of economic reform was of short duration because the objectives of production and investment which had been pursued previously were maintained (in addition in June 1931 in the name of the struggle against egalitarianism and against leftist leveling of wages¹ the highest wages were increased) Economic policy then began a third phase.

The third phase was continued up to the end of 1932. It was marked by the maintenance of very high targets previously announced in the First Five Year Plan and by the formulation of very ambitious targets for the second Five Year Plan. It was also characterized by a resumption of high inflation which took the monetary circulation from 43.35 million rubles on January 1 1931 to an increase of 94 percent over 14 months. Above all it was marked by the famine of 1932-33 and by real economic chaos. It thus created conditions for a transition to a new period.

This new period (from 1933 in the west) was characterized by a reduction (but not a disappearance) of unreality in the plans by a slowing down of inflation² by a wider acceptance of the free operation of present markets, and by massive and large-scale measures of control and repression.³

The move from the typical planning and economic policy of the early 1930s to that of the following years was largely imposed by the crisis that matured from the second half of 1931 and openly burst on the scene in 1933. So far as planning was concerned the situation was so confused from the fall of 1931 that the Comptoir journal *Pravda rokospolitika* could publish for the several months (the last number of 1931 was sent to the printer on October 1 the first number of 1932 was put in the presses on May 25) in 1932 there was the regularization on a large scale of the bolotka markets where 'free prices' were used.

The essential features of what for many years would be Soviet economic policy and planning were drawn at this time. These features were not the 'expression of previous theoretical concepts (on the contrary the theory would be transformed in order to justify current practices). They were the product of economic, social and political transformation of the entire community in the Soviet social structure: these crises and these new social relationships also transformed official doctrine.⁴

When the planning of 1927-31 is compared with that of 1932-36 years, it is seen that the first years were marked by an extraordinary "unreality" while the following years saw a certain (relative) return to reality. The size of the gaps between plan and real economic change confirms in every case the absence of "control" by the plans over this economic change. To illustrate this fact, we will give some examples.

(a) The first five-year period

It has already been seen that the figures of the First Five-Year Plan on several occasions were revised upwards.¹ In thus adopting more and more ambitious targets, the Soviet leaders turned up their noses at the real possibilities and the warnings comparatively prudent, of those occupying responsible positions in the planning organizations. The whole picture of the political situation in fact impelled the leading elements of the Party to adopt "objectives" that were higher and higher, and to silence those who reminded them of the dangers of such "ambitious" plans. The "objectives" written into the plans were even then imposed against immediate reality under the influence of "abstract requirements". Thus, in 1930, the First Five-Year Plan kept as a "target" an increase of 67 percent real income for the agricultural population, and of 71 percent for the non-agricultural population, and this at a time when measures had to be taken cope with a real lowering of the standard of life.

(1) "Targets" and results of the First Five-year Plan

Plans elaborated in these circumstances could only be mythical. To show this, it is not necessary to compare in detail the "targets" and the results of the different plans.² It is sufficient to examine a few figures.

Let us take the First Five-Year Plan. It is known that, according to official declarations, this was to have been practically achieved in four years and three months (at the end of 1932).

rather than the one from October for which statistics were compiled. Thus when Stalin presented the balance sheet of the first five-year plan, he was not if anything? more than the average element of the CCP had all along had the plan for industrial production at a whole to be exceeded by 10 percent—towards the end of the fifth year of the five-year period.¹⁴

If this statement had been correct it would have been still the effect that the industrial plan had been exceeded in almost all cases over all but the last two years of the period.

Firstly between the time when the First Five-Year Plan was adopted in April 1928 and when its targets were for the first time achieved or exceeded¹⁵ the plan has been modified so often that the way left of the original Soviet model of the five-year plan was adopted in 1929 but abandoned during the last three years and replaced by more ambitious plans made the same.

However even if one accepts such a relatively arbitrary compilation of the figures reveals that the plan in 1928 was only half way "fulfilled."

According to the resolution adopted in April 1928 by the Eleventh Party Conference industrial production should have risen from 18.3 billion rubles in 1927/28 to 43.2 billion at the end of the First Plan. Now in these 13.9 percent for 1928 according to the estimates of Blodgman estimates which postulate fulfillment the production of main industry rises by 12 percent.¹⁶ However not only was it exceeded much more rapidly than intended, as a whole the achievement rate of the industrial plan is therefore certainly very different from the percent calculated for the industry that was established.

Because of the uncertainty which surrounds the actual figures due to the expressed imprecisions it is useful to quote a number of statistics expressed in physical quantities (in kilograms, kilowatt hours and meters). In fact the latter figures are however also those that are very weak using the official sources on them given here are some of these rates (in 1927/28 percent) steel 24 percent pig iron 62 percent zinc 17 percent sheet metal 54 percent wool 16.14 percent cotton 11.13 percent paper 32 percent registered 13.6 to 14 percent.

This observation could be added: it is misleading to calculate the achievement rate of plans by comparing the official

produced with what should have been produced according to the plan provisions. In fact, the 'objectives' of the plan were certain increases of production. So it is by comparison with the case that the achievement rate should be calculated. In this case above this gives ratios that are much lower. For example, the amount of steel produced annually was to increase according to the initial plan by 6.1 million tons. The actual increase was 1.6 million tons, an achievement rate of the target increase of only 26.2 percent.¹⁸ Moreover for a certain number of industrial products instead of the increases provided by the Five Year Plan there were declines to be recorded. Such was the case for most industrial production connected with agriculture: cotton cloth, wooden cloth, linen cloth and sugar.

(2) 'Rovsky' and actual abandonment of targets of the First Five-Year Plan

The changes made in the First Five-Year Plan after April 1930 in no way helped to lessen the mythical character of the 'targets'. On the contrary they exacerbated them. They increased in fact an absolute result of the initial plan as more and more ambitious and less and less achievable targets were adopted. Here are some examples.

At the beginning of 1930 the target production figures that had to be achieved in the last year of the first Plan were fantastically fantastic levels. Therefore it was a question of producing at the end of the five-year period 120-130 million tons of coal instead of the 75 million tons initially set; 17-20 million tons of pig iron instead of 10 million; 450,000 tractors instead of 50,000.¹⁹

This remark is necessary here. Such 'targets' no longer corresponded to what one could reasonably call 'production forecasts'. Rather they corresponded to a forecast of needs which were exaggerated by the rate for accumulation and the promises that had been made. Thus there was an emergence of abstract requirements 'that imposed themselves' in actual fact on the authorities as well as on the planners.²⁰ The latter were summoned by the political leaders to establish new plans incorporating targets that were more and more elevated.²¹ The end result therefore were figures that were incoherent and unconnected with real possibilities.²²

In 1930 and 1931 there was no time to prepare a new Five-Year Plan, and the latter would not have been able to "hold together" the figures of all the projects that had been started. The political leadership then gave up the idea of elaborating a new plan. In its eyes, rhythmic decree everything, the 'targets' became 'challenger that it was necessary to take up' and the 'planners' were regarded as hindrances and 'old hat,' and it was decided to get rid of them. Gospplan was renovated, with men like Krzhizhanovskii and Strelilin old Party members devoted to the leadership being cast aside and replaced by more docile men.

On the eve of the Sixteenth Party Congress (June 20 to July 13, 1930) which witnessed the victory of those who supported an industrialization even more rapid than that forecast by the plan adopted in 1929,² the only acceptable perspective was one of rhythmic progress and ceaselessly increasing industrial production. Kuibyshev at his time said that it was necessary to double each year investments in fixed capital and increase production by 30 percent each year.³

Bearing in mind the results actually attained, it is not surprising that at the beginning of 1933 all these targets were "forgotten"; that is why the balance sheet of the First Five-Year Plan, presented by Stalin at this time referred simply to the figures of the initial plan even though it had been abandoned for a most three years.

(b) *The second five-year period*

In 1933 and 1934 a Second Plan project and then a definitive plan were elaborated.⁴ The 'targets' set by these two documents were very close but the second was more modest and more 'realistic' than the first. It is this which was adopted by the Seventeenth Party Congress which met in February and March 1934, that is, during the second year of the Plan's course.⁵

Because of this greater realism the percentages of "fulfillment" of the second Five-Year Plan were much higher than those of the First. For industry taken as a whole it even reached, globally, a 'fulfillment' of 102 percent. However the global

figures are overestimated because they were calculated in prices and are therefore "swollen" by the rise in the latter (although the statisticians claimed to have eliminated the effects of this price rise in their calculations). Moreover, the global figures obscured considerable inequalities in the 'fulfillment rate.' These inequalities meant that the structure and the proportions of the economy were not in any way transformed "conformity" with the plan. Here again the idea of a 'control' by the plan over economic change seems mythical, this being revealed by the economic crises, which were obviously not "programmed."

So as not to clutter this exposition by quoting too many figures, we will limit ourselves to indicating the "fulfillment percentage for certain of the targets" of the Second Plan fixed in quantity rather than prices and comparing the target production with the actual production.

"Fulfillment" percentage of production targets set by the Second Five-Year Plan (1933-37)²⁷

Electricity	96	Cotton cloth	64
Oil	61	Woollen goods	48
Coal	88	Paper	83
Pig-iron	91	Sugar	104
Leather footwear	107		

It can be seen that the 'fulfillment' percentages here vary between 48 and 107. It also may be seen how enormous was the "lag" in production of industrial consumer goods, which the Second Plan had 'anticipated' would increase enough to quickly raise consumption levels.

In agriculture the 'fulfilment' of the Plan was very weak, as much in cereal (despite the exceptional harvest of 1937) as in livestock. For the first, the average harvest was only 76 percent of what had been forecast for the average of the annual plans.²⁸ For the second, the number of cows only represented 78 percent of the targets.²⁹ Production actually obtained in 1937 was therefore very distant from the 'targets' of the plan.

The "targets" fixed in the Second Plan also reflect essentially the 'abstract requirements' of accelerated accumulation (thus in spite of the monetary brake imposed by the 1933 crisis).

and the way in which the Party leadership took care of these requirements,' which to it seemed 'possible desirable or necessary. They were a product of the economic and political situation as it was understood at the top of the Party ~~seen~~ through the ideology & forms which were dominant there. Part of the targets retained in this way were only there as promises to be followed by no concrete action.²⁹ Other targets those which actually seemed to be 'essential' were on the other hand 'the occasion for 'prompt' action continued throughout the Five-Year period (which was the case with what was due to increase the output of the main means of production).

(c) The third five-year period

The working out of the Third Five Year Plan took place at a period of extreme political tension of mass repression and of the physical elimination of most of the old Party leadership. In these circumstances, the Third Plan was presented for the ratification by a Party Congress only in March 1939 (at the Eighteenth Congress), more than two years after the beginning of the five-year period. More exactly the Congress was summoned to ratify only the 'main tasks' of the Third Plan.³⁰ A definitive version of the latter would never be published: the document published in 1939 is much less detailed than those of the two previous plans.³¹

A comparison of actual economic change with the 'targets' written in this document shows once more the mythical nature of these 'targets'. One can see this by examining the following figures, which express in percentages the increases forecast by the Third Five-Year Plan and the increases actually obtained in 1940 when three-fifths of the five year period had passed:

Actual increases of production as percentages of the increases anticipated for 1940 by the Third Five Year Plan³²

Electricity	32.7	Woolen goods	13.0
Coal	37.2		
Cotton	13.7	Sugar	(production decline of 310,000 tons instead of planned 1,470,000 tons issued)
Oil	11.7		
Steel	5.6		
Cotton cloth	32.6		

As may be seen, not only was the 1940 level far from the 50 to 60 percent of the production increase forecast for 1942 but in addition, the inequalities of gross rates (compared to those forecast) are considerable. Leaving on one side the falls in production, the above percentages vary in their relationship by a ratio of 1 to 0.4.²⁴

There is something more serious in a period when war threatened, the production plans of oil, coal, and steel have only miserable "fulfillment rates." In fact, during the first three years of the Third Plan the production of petrol, coke and steel almost stagnated compared to 1937.

The figures show simultaneously the scale of the disorganization which then reigned in essential industries, and the absence of "control" exercised by the Plan over real economic development.²⁵

II. The effects of the development of contradictions between plans and realities

The inadequacy of the plans in relation to reality and, more generally, to the objective economic possibilities, gave rise to a series of consequences. The latter concerned especially the aggravation of the contradictions in the sphere of production and exchange.

(a) *The cycle of shortages and the "target inflation" of the plans*

Putting into action plans that were partly unrealizable, because sufficient material and human means were not available, inevitably brought shortages.

During the 1930s and especially during the first five-year period, the appearance of shortages, as is known, led the Soviet leaders to raise rather than lower the plan "targets," by establishing tasks for the production of "desert" products that were progressively bigger. It was in this way, for example, that the "targets" of production fixed for metallurgy showed an extraordinary growth between 1929 and 1932.

Far from reducing the shortages resources to such plans evasions obviously only made the shortages worse. In fact the fixing of supplementary targets required the construction of extra factories, which made necessary the provision of additional means. For example the starting of new industrial construction sites required still more steel, so much so that it became more and more scarce.

In concrete terms one could say that the list of some 1200 industrial construction sites contained in the third volume presenting the First Five Year Plan was virtually doubled during the months which followed the adoption of the Plan. Consequently, against the 22 billion rubles which, according to the Five-Year Plan, had to be invested in industry construction and transport, there was in the end an actual sum of investment of 41.6 billion.²⁰

Such a growth of investment weighed heavily on the resources available for consumption. It also brought about a tremendous disequilibrium between the available material resources and the needs of the different construction sites.

(b) Production anarchy and the slow-down of growth

During the 1930s attempts aiming to resolve the problems posed by the development of shortages by inflating the targets' of the plans led to the hasty adoption of industrial projects which often did not rest on any serious preliminary studies. This helped to intensify the anarchy of production which was in any case engendered by the setting up of new construction sites and factories which could not receive the necessary amounts of raw materials, fuel, or labor to function regularly.

However the atmosphere of urgency fostered by the political leadership, wishing to push the rhythm of growth higher and higher levels when its decisive disorganized production and ended up by hindering the long term maintenance of high levels made it quite exceptional for those on the ground who saw the unrealizable nature of a large part of the targets imposed by the upper political levels—to make a protest.

No warning like the following formulated by an old expert entrusted with putting into operation an industrial target of increased oil production were quite rare. He addressed the CC in the following terms:

I cease to be responsible for the planning department. I count for the target fixed at 40 million tons as purely arbitrary. More than one third of the oil must come from unexplored regions, which is like sharing the skin of the bear before trapping him or even before knowing where he is. I add that the present three cracking plants must be completed before the end of the five year period. This is due to the acute lack of metal and the fact that the highest complex technique of cracking has still not been mastered by us...¹²

The multiplication of such programs at the beginning of the First Five Year Plan meant that the share of fixed investment represented by investment frozen in uncompleted programs rose to about 40 percent in 1943. Thus these programs immobilized enormous amounts of steel which was in deficit anyway. This in turn hindered the full utilization of existing factories and slowed down the development of production in these factories and industrialization in general.

Improvised and haphazardly constructed programs sprung up on the wave of an accumulation which rapidly increased. We see equally numerous in the construction of new industrial centers. These new centers were to be established in coordination with the location of raw materials. Thus the Soviet planner N. Glazkov said that a whole series of towns have been built without their plans having been approved. In other words in an anarchic way. Consequently the inhabitants of these towns were often without elementary conveniences (water, drains etc.) necessary for urban life.

Without exception these individuals who had developed during the thirties were of such a size that almost all people doubtless few who allowed themselves to join out the unrealizations thereof of the "targets" of the plans (initial or revised) were examined or severely condemned without their arguments being discussed.

The political power thus acted as an agent for the contradictions directed toward accumulation. It waged more and more sharply against those who thought they could indicate the contradictions between plan and reality and the economic crisis by which resulted from them. Such people were usually considered "traitors" because in the eyes of the leaders they at least demonstrated a "lack of confidence in the possibilities of the system or revealed their 'outdated concepts'."

The production crisis by which developed in these circumstances helped to slow down the development of industry and to lower agricultural production. In fact, as has been seen, a large proportion of the material resources (available in sufficient quantity) was immobilized in equipment or machines which were not working or which were badly used. Thus current production was lower than it could have been with different targets.

The adoption of unrealizable "targets" had also cumulative effects—the impossibility of reaching certain anticipated targets blocked the achievement of other targets which could be achieved only if the first were achieved. For example a low "fulfillment rate" of steel production entailed a fulfillment rate even lower for other plans of production or investment which required steel. Thus during the First Five Year Plan certain factories could not be built because of lack of steel—hence the desirous fulfillment rates for certain products like fertilizers.²⁰

Production anarchy showed itself also in the distribution of production. Thus the fluctuation in the output of numerous factories and the more or less long stoppages in activity at various construction sites meant that part of the output of the new factories which should have been sent to nearby consumers, had to be sent thousands of kilometers which overburdened the railroads and caused real chaos in transportation.

Finally the stock of agricultural machines and tractors usually functioned only to the extent of about half of its capacity because of shortage of necessary spare parts.

Production anarchy and the unrealizable nature of some of the "targets" of the plan nurtured other contradictions which manifested themselves in the existence of an inflationary pressure that was almost permanent. The nullification of

many production "targets," while sustained expenses too high or exceeded the forecast, resulted, almost permanently, in an excess of distributed monetary incomes over the availability of products for consumers. Thus in spite of "controls" and regulations prices had a tendency to rise and this even affected the "planned prices," above all those for consumer goods.*

The insufficiencies and the irregularities of supplies had the consequence that part of the products were diverted towards "illegal channels" where black market prices ruled because the existence of a 'parallel economic world' was made what happened in the "official world" partly fictitious.

*(c) The application of priorities
and the development of day-to-day
administrative management*

Anarchy of production and incoherence of plans from the beginning of the 1930s put enterprises into a chaotic situation. Most often, they could not obtain the quantities of raw materials, fuel, equipment means of transport, etc. which they needed have in order to attempt to "fulfil" the plans which were fixed for them by the Plan and/or to avoid interrupting their production. In these circumstances, enterprises were equally incapable of coping with all the delivery obligations to which the plan had pledged them. The situation was all the more entangled because enterprises were usually provided with financial means allowing them to negotiate for volumes of purchases greater than were actually obtainable, taking into account the quantities of available products and the prices at which they had to be handed over.

To cope with the chaos which was developing in this way the supply of enterprises with raw materials, fuel, equipment etc. was more and more concentrated within the administrative organs. These latter had to ensure a centralized sharing of the main products necessary for industry. Such a division could not really be 'guided' by the plans because the products necessary for the achievement of the latter existed only in insufficient quantity. The distribution was therefore subject

to sectors of industry the value of which certain enterprises were supplied before others.

In contrast the effective activity of production units depended to a large measure on an application of priority measures carried out day by day. This had only a causal relationship with the quantitative targets of the plans. This is only and planning had to be subordinated either at the time of plans with their corrections and variations or the parts themselves tended to be replaced by the application of the administrative management of production.

The organizations which distributed the means of production in economic plans were only reference points among others. This was the even the relatively secondary position of reference for the plans not being achievable could not be used to shut out the actual products. Also administrative planning served above all to temper the order of priority ordered by the political power and by the central planning organs. The nucleus of the Soviet economy which was involved in this way was very far removed from the idea of a planned economy. It hoped to reduce the influence of the mind of the plan "targets" on real economic change.¹¹

At the time when the system of priorities was introduced in 1910 it aimed at first to ensure the free operation priority for 17 enterprises called stark enterprises which were to set an example for the country. The priorities ensured by the enterprises benefiting from the system concerned not only the supply of material but also the supply of labor force and the financial means.

In 1911 the system was extended to new enterprises, especially to the metallurgical combine of Kuznetsk and Magnitogorsk, the tractor factories at Chelyabinsk and Kharbin, the oil factories of Moscow and Novorossiisk, etc.¹² The decision to grant priority to supplies for those factories meant that the activities in iron and construction sites which were to supply them also had to be regarded as automatic for priority. In this sum the railroads had to give priority to the transport necessary for the priority factories and the later Commissariat had to provide them before all others with raw materials. As previously known there was general on the list of priority enterprises. Not long ago the list included in the course of 1911, for a long

mining equipment, certain railroad construction enterprises, etc.⁴⁴

Very quickly the priorities thus established came into conflict with each other and it was necessary on a number of occasions to recompute priorities for priorities of a given enterprise. Thus at certain times the oil industry saw fuel supplies pipes diverted to the automobile industry, so that arrangements had to be made between the railroads and the oil companies.

In these circumstances it was necessary to establish a list of priorities of priority in the form of tables, decided upon in the spur of the moment and destined to serve as a guide in case of insufficient supplies of certain articles by one or another enterprise. According to the situation moment the priorities that were put into action by the various enterprises of heavy industry, which was the case of certain enterprises of light industry — for example, housing.⁴⁵

The relationship which this system had with the plan is the plan are extremely vague. At those however times the opening of credits were within the limits of the plan more exactly, within the limits of the last version of the plan annual or quarterly. These limits were far from being rigid and therefore exerted little influence on the distribution of means of production of finished products. In former even the proportions in which the different sectors had to grow were not respected.

In fact the development of the Priority system was a state programme. It was the result of a series of decisions and responses. Who being responsible in these decisions? It increased economic disorder and the society which centralized the activity of non priority enterprises. This situation of purchasing was reduced still more. It was controlled by a centralized administrative management department day to day.

In spite of everything, such admissions to the use of priority in the system of allowing industries to obtain certain sites and lines of transport judged to be most important to avoid consequences by the ever extending shortages. In the absence of such access the launching of plants in large parts of rural land would have been planned deficit of essential products would have been

commodities market. Trade in grain was completely free and so was meat, bread and some other foodstuffs which were sold by shopkeepers at less than their cost price. Nevertheless, there was a very severe shortage of meat throughout the country, as between 1928 and 1930 the most dramatic consequences of the collectivization of agriculture manifested themselves in a sharp decline in meat production which was not expected. In the early stages of collectivization, however, there was also a sharp slowing down of meat growth. Such was the case, notably, during the First Five-Year Plan, when meat production did not increase despite the recourse to a system of priorities. This was obviously the result of preventing the herders from lowering their cattle numbers due to serious accumulation of meat priorities, and by which the value brought along with it there was a collapse of the relationship between increased production and the amount of available funds. The collective meat effort was wastage and substantial underutilization of the lands of agriculture.¹²

An important point also deserves to be discussed. It is plain from the available information that the actual functioning of the priority system was far from allowing different industries to develop in conformity with the requirements of farm output and growth and with the needs of the engineering and the country's independence. The agricultural sector, and particularly the other industries, had to pay a heavy toll for the administrative costs of the different ministries. This has often played a decisive role in determining the relative financial and technical costs of the best Soviet enterprises of industry. Whatever the situation, the main factor here is the use of centralized principles of authority.

Another characteristic feature of the Stalinist economy was the monopoly of certain branches of industry. Thus, it produced machines that powered all the factories from the Eleventh Party Congress (1929) on, except those belonging to or the building up of its dependent enterprises. This industry, but less especially the machine works of Moscow (in the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s), became the main industry largely supplied 2 per cent of the total industrial output of engineering and metal-working industry.

At the beginning of 1929, a measure was introduced which increased the administrative "weight" of this industry. It was promoted to the rank of an individual trust, following a convention by Kaganovich.¹⁰

In 1930 the "targets" of the plans of this industry were substantially increased, which reflected its change of status. However, the effective allocations of resources did not follow as the industry could not achieve its investment plan. As it turned out priority was given to the more prestigious industries, which had the advantage of a greater physical administrative weight (like the truck and tractor industries).¹¹

During the second five-year period, the machine tool industry again saw its "status" improved (partly due to the increased demand for machine tools coming from other industries using these machines). Nevertheless again the effective allocations of resources did not follow the forecasts of the plans and the utilizing industries had to develop their own machine tool workshops. Such a practice did not always fit treatment for the global industrial requirements and more particularly for the needs of the armament industry which required heavy and also precision machine-tools. It was only in the course of the Third Five-Year Plan that urgent measures were taken aimed at making up, partially, the administrative lag of the industry. In fact these measures were taken only when the war broke out the ambitious plans adopted in September 1939 and December 1940 had only been partially achieved.¹²

The preceding observations show how the anarchy in production and the development of the "priority system" brought consequences which were in contradiction not only with the "forecastists" of the plans but also with the formally presented priorities. The same phenomenon also resulted in serious political consequences. They increased even more the role of the central offices of state entrusted with managing the shortages' and taking repressive measures against those who did not observe the sharing out measures taken centrally. Consequently there was an extension of a state apparatus that was more and more hierarchical and swollen.

Notice

- 1 Thus between December 1927 and April 1928 the forecast left no oil
2 and gas reserves in the country in India grew from 4.1 to 10.1 per cent or about
3 to each section at about the same time the British colonial government
4 invested in fixed capital to operate in five years were put in motion, first section
5 of this work, p. 44.

6 R. Tawney, *The Emergence of the Soviet Economic System* (1938) and
7 this paper NPS on a University of Birmingham 1972 gives a very
8 instructive analysis of economic policy and Soviet planning in 1928-1934
9 terms of how the theme of disappearance of classes developed there.
10 That communism may be found in the thesis of R. Tawney's *After the
11 Tempo Lavoro* (1928) is shown in the minutes of the meeting
12 of 19-20 January 1928 at the University of Paris. (1928) See also in the same source
13 the conception arrived upon at the third meeting of 9-10
14 February 1928, a paper by the colleague Chaplin in a note of 5 January 1928
15 written 9-21 1928.

16 *Pravda*, February 4 1930

17 Pravda February 6 1930 After the war when the world would have sub-
18 jected this picture of States would be altered and it would be a matter of
19 exchanges organized by our commercial organizations. (See also
20 *Pravda* Vol XI, p. 1671)

21 See above Vol XII, p. 36

22 Bulletin mensuel de statistique de la S.D.N. monthly statement of the work of
23 the League of Nations and the Monthly Review of the Marine Society
24 Bank in London.

25 Thus between January 1 1913 and January 1914 a similar calculation
26 was from \$4 to 113 billion rubles an increase of 30 percent. See
27 Pashkov (L. *Historie economique*, p. 770).

28 See the first three parts of this volume.

29 R. W. Tawney emphasizes for example that the system of wages differed
30 before and after 1917 and after June 1917 does not seem to have been
31 established because the previous system had been proved to have caused
32 the low level productivity. He observes that in his view elsewhere the
33 Soviet economic system was strongly influenced by the ideas of the
34 dominant group in the Party that is to say by the theory of Lenin. *The
35 Emergence*, p. 23.

36 Some other examples will be contained in his work on
37 cost comparison (first and second appears in the *Archiv für Politik*
38 from see also in Soviet Review June 4-1933 by H. Tawney. The
39 overstatement and lack of fact here can, p. 237ff and M. Lewis, "The
40 The Disappearance of Planning in the U.S.S.R." pp. 2-19 also H. Davies
41 and S. Woodcock in *Marx Review* December 1979, "Further thoughts
42 on the First Soviet Five Year Plan," pp. 7-10.

43 Thus is the case. The results of the First
44 Five Year Plan and has been published in several formats.

45 *Bolshevik Workers*, Vol. 13, p. 182

46 *APSS* (1953), Vol. 2, p. 40.

- 16 D. Holzman, *Soviet Industrial*, p. 73.
- 17 C. Bettelheim, *Is Russia's Plan a Success?* and *The Soviet Plan*, p. 10. The initial targets were exceeded.
- 18 R. Dunn, *What the USSR's Five-Year Plan Can Tell Us About Soviet Industrialization* (1957), p. 10.
- 19 See M. Lewin, 'The disappearance of the plan: how far has the economy moved from its original goals?' in *Planning and Change*, 1970, 12, 1, pp. 1-18; and 'How far has the economy moved from its original goals?' in *Planning and Change*, 1970, 12, 2, pp. 1-18.
- 20 The pressure of grain requirements was felt from the start of the first or the last of four plans, according to the former agriculture minister. Thus in March 1947 at the Fifth Plenum of the Central Committee, Stalin said: 'We have to increase our production but cannot do so agreeably with the economic conditions in the country which characterise our present situation by the end of the five-year period' (TASS Press Service, March 9, 1947). Cf. also Torgoshev, *On the First Five-Year Plan*, p. 10, which gives birth to the problem of agricultural output. It was in May 1949, coinciding with the signing of the first five-year plan, that the adopted national version of the plan of economic growth became too concentrated. Taking into account the failure of the regime of grain rents, the framers of policy for grain output were pessimistic. This was to show as follows: 4.1 million tonnes of grain imports and 14 percent of total grain exports, assuming that the international exchange situation, the world market price for grain (about £1.10 per tonne) would be £1.00 per tonne and £1.00 per tonne for wheat. The right up to 1949 there was no data on the export of grain that is known (See Part One of this volume).
- 21 In general, The disappearance of the plan, p. 10; and *The Soviet Plan*, p. 22.
- 22 On page 100 reference is made to the First Five-Year Plan adopted in 1928, which had already been overtaken by the new five-year plan, and to the rapid growth of industrial output. It cited production figures for 1928-29, the first year of the first five-year plan, and compared them with those of 1930-31, the first year of the second five-year plan. As R. Dunn and S. V. Gerasimov, *Industrialisation in Russia: The First Five-Year Plan* (1960), p. 10, note, the same data were obtained as follows. The production level during 1928-29 was greater for production and investment than that achieved during 1930-31. The difference of production was the influence of the change in the physical and financial plan of investment (see *Planning*, 1960, 1, 1, p. 10, for this article).
- 23 There was a sharp rise in the rate of growth of industrial output, which was based on a proper balance of forces in the existence of targets and the attempt to expand output. At this time there was no lack of labour in rural labour and a large concentration of workers.
- 24 M. Lewin, 'The disappearance of the plan: how far has the economy moved from its original goals?' in *Planning and Change*, 1970, 12, 1, pp. 1-18; and 'How far has the economy moved from its original goals?' in *Planning and Change*, 1970, 12, 2, pp. 1-18.

30. See V. M. Gerasimov, *Plan chislennosti chernykh kremlyakov v SSSR i v SSSR* (Moscow, 1940).
31. KPSS (1959), pp. 744ff.
32. C. Bettelheim, *La Planification*, pp. 288-90.
33. See note 24 above, and also A. Nove, *A Plan for the Second Five-Year Plan* (London, 1958), p. 166.
34. The following figures are taken from the first part of the *Statistical Year Book of the Soviet Union* (Moscow, 1958) and show the changes in what was to be the essential work plan, and the actual output of the Second Five-Year Plan. According to the *Year Book* the aim of the Second Plan was to eliminate the differences between town and rural areas between physical output per capita worked hour and between the urban and rural population. In fact, however, the figures show that the difference between town and rural areas increased. In 1937 there were 1,000 hours worked per capita in Moscow, 1,050 in the towns, 1,100 in the districts, and 1,150 in the villages. In 1958 the results show a slight improvement, with 1,050 hours worked per capita in Moscow, 1,080 in the towns, 1,120 in the districts, and 1,180 in the villages. In reality these differences were not reduced in the Second Plan because certain measures like labour rationing and rationing largely contributed to the development of the rural economy.
35. KPSS (1959), pp. 87ff.
36. See *The First Five-Year Plan: Soviet Economic Planning 1928-1933* (Moscow, 1935).
37. Figures calculated from sources of notes 24 and 25; see also *Statistical Year Book* 1947, and for more detailed figures N. J. Scott, *Soviet Industrialisation*, p. 399.
38. See note 19 of the next chapter.
39. It should be pointed out that the plans did no better at controlling the central state bank's productive forces. Thus the regional distribution of investment and production had only a very distant resemblance to the targets set in the plans. During 1928-34, for example, the central state regions experienced in relative terms an capital accumulation much higher than that forecast by the plans. See H. Hartog, *Soviet Transport Finance* (Washington, 1968), especially p. 142, and H. Chamberlain, *Industrialisation*.
40. *Kharkov after fifteen years of socialist industrialisation* (Moscow, 1969), pp. 71-2.
41. Weber, *Industrialisierung* (1960), p. 11. An alternative though translatable approach is A. Serein, *Die Industriellen Pläne*, p. 80. In the main, however, it seems that this engineer was not particularly hot about all this, as reported his own findings as he continued to put into operation the plan which could not be carried out for the reasons given by the engineer. Consequently enormous funds were invested in construction sites that were paralysed for long periods, and the production of oil was a long way from the figure "set" by the Plan.
42. *Narodnoye zhizn' Sotsialisticheskogo perioda* (Moscow, 1960), p. 11, quoted by A. Kappeler, *An Interview*, p. 124.
43. The first plan provided that at its completion 6,000 million tons of steel plate would be produced. In 1917 only 920,000 tons were produced (see R. Medvedev, *Let history judge*, p. 106). Many other figures are in pp. 194-106 of this book.

- 40 Some figures illustrate the scale of the price increase between 1929 and 1940:

*Retail prices for products sold in Moscow
(roubles)*

	1929	1940
Rye bread; 1 kg.	0.08	1.00
Wheat bread; 1 kg.	0.15	2.00
Potatoes; 1 kg.	0.06	0.80
Beef; 1 kg. top quality	0.65	14.00
Fresh milk; 1 litre	0.25	2.20
Refined sugar; 1 kg.	0.70	5.50
Cotton cloth; 1 metre	0.40	4.10

(Source Sovnarkom price committee quoted in *Ekonomika i Politika*, November December 1957 p. 85.)

- 41 For more than thirty years one of the characteristics of the Soviet economy has been the day-by-day administrative management of resources has not disappeared today but its role is substantially reduced what it was in the 1930s. In fact, in present conditions the economic plans are less 'ambitious' and more "realistic," and thus a much more limited place is to be occupied by centralized direction of resources.
- 42 See the article by Reznik in PK No 1 1931 quoted by E. Zaretski *Planification* p. 169. Zaretski rightly points out that a planned system had already been established during War Communism.
- 43 See above p. 170.
- 44 Between February and June 1931 several decrees lengthened the state priority enterprises. See *Kommunisticheskoye zhurnal* of this period.
- 45 See S. Chirkovskaya *Statistika* No. 2 pp. 311 and 315. See also her article in *Pravda* No. 12 1931 Art. 116 and E. Zaretski *Planification* p. 170.
- 46 *Dokumenty APSSR po voprosam planifikatsii* Vol. 2 p. 308.
- 47 These last priorities came to be more especially in 1932 and 1933 see Zaretski *Planification* p. 21.
- 48 An approximate idea of the size of these phenomena can be gained from the following figures between 1928 and 1940 the value in constant prices of the fixed capital of industry was multiplied by 8.2 (VKhGKh p. 36) but the revised index of industrial production was by 4.6 times increased by the same proportion, it multiplied by a coefficient of from 3.1 to 4.3 according to estimate (Hodgeman *Soviet Industrial* p. 41). But in most other countries industrial production increased faster than the accumulated index of capital. In the U.S.A. for example between 1928-9 and 1939-40 industrial production (no average for each period) rose by 4.7 and 3.1 percent respectively whereas industry's fixed capital increased by 8 and 0.9 percent (see the article by A. Arzumanyan, *Present problems in the development of our industry* in *Pravda*, February 24 and 25 1964).

- 49 Those parts, and those which follow on from the thesis of J. Cooper *The Development of the Soviet Machine Tool Industry 1917-1941* (University of Birmingham, 1975), especially pp. 428 ff.
- 50 See above p. 420
- 51 See above p. 430 J. Cooper rightly remarks that the delay suffered by the machine tool industry toward the end of the Second Plan is partly explicable by its loss at this time of Kaganov ch., very powerful in the Party leadership, who was transferred from his commission to the aircraft industry

The economic crises of the 1930s

A major characteristic of the industrial development and more generally of the enlarged reproduction of the material conditions of production in the Soviet Union was its very irregular and jerky aspect. As we have just seen in examining the "putting into operation" of the Five-Year Plans, economic reality was very far removed from the harmonious development about which official ideology boasted.

In fact the Soviet economy experienced phases of rapid expansion and phases of near-total stagnation or even decline. These fluctuations affected particularly the rates of accumulation and revealed that the enlarged reproduction was effective in a cyclic manner and underwent crises.

L The 1933 crises

The increase in the rate of accumulation, in terms of the relationship between gross investment and national income, was extremely rapid in 1931. According to an official statistic this rate then reached 36 percent of the national income against 27.3 percent in 1930. This increase absorbed the total increase of national income. The poverty and pauperism of the available statistical data for 1932 make it difficult to calculate the accumulation rate of that year. Nevertheless it seems that in 1932 the rate again increased.

Although accumulation was already concentrated towards industry, its increase was accompanied by a rapid fall off the growth rate of industrial production. This fall indicates that the materials and social conditions were such that the investment was less and less capable of maintaining the same rhythm of growth of industrial production.

The fall in the rates of increase was even more marked after the completion of industrial capitalist goods' monopoly taking account of the collapse of artisan production and village economy which occurred at the beginning of 1930. At this time there was a serious decline in the productive capacity of the masses.

The far slower rates of industrial production, the decline in the availability of consumer goods on the best part of food fronts, the repetition of all these phenomena, caused a reduction and on the volume of the labor force that construction could have at its disposal, concluded the material bases for the crisis of 1933 and the decline in investment which was one of its manifestations.

Thus whereas net investments in fixed capital (at constant prices of 1928) had rapidly increased between 1929 and 1932, these same investments diminished by approximately 12 percent in 1933.⁹

The same phenomenon of regression can be observed in the field of employment whereas the latter had substantially risen during 1930 and 1932 and declined in 1933. Only the decrease was particularly sharp (from 1 percent to minus 1 percent) was among the less significant. Especially striking was the extremely rapid increase in construction (it increased in three times the construction site new areas obtained). In fact in this sector the number of workers employed fell by more than one-third in no less than 11 percent between June 1932 and June 1933.

The crisis of 1933 had the essential feature of it was a over accumulation characterized by an expansion of investment with the latter exceeding the limits imposed by existing resources (notably resources of labor).

At first sight, the crisis of 1933 seems to have been due to the agricultural crisis which broke out at that time. However looking at things more closely it appears that the crisis was more fundamentally to the scale attained by the process of accumulation during the years 1929-32. The sharp rise in

accumulation was such that there resulted an exacerbation of contradictions within the industrial sector and even more between industry and agriculture. The latter thereby found itself deprived of essential resources. It was not capable of maintaining a level of production corresponding to the needs of industry or of continuing to provide it with the labor force required for the pursuit of an expansion corresponding to the volume of the investments made up to them in industry. In addition, the under-nourishment which severely struck several rural regions between 1932 and 1934 reduced the productive capacity of agriculture.

On the other hand, the fall in the level of consumption in the towns badly affected labor productivity and reinforced to a partly and momentarily the productive effects expected from industrial investment.

Up to a certain point, this situation was recognized at the beginning of 1931 when it was admitted that the decline in agricultural production and the migration towards the cities had reached such a scale that it was essential to immediately restrain accumulation, and also to try to put a brake on town development. As *Izvestiya* wrote:

The towns have been extended too much. The lack of supply of urban agglomerations, the supplying of new construction sites and providing big centers with the products that are necessary for them pose problems which are complicated and difficult to solve. The migrations of great masses of population seriously hinder the provisioning of the country, overpopulate the towns and provoke an insatiable housing crisis.

These lines pointed in summary and not without optimism some of the effects of over-accumulation in the preceding years. They illustrate the limits against which continuation of the process of accumulation collided.

II The economic recovery of 1934

During 1933 and 1934 there again developed conditions for an increased social reproduction and for an increase of investment.

These conditions resulted, in particular from the early labor production of equipment installed during previous years and which allowed greater production at a smaller real cost. Thanks to this equipment it was possible to liberate part of the labor force from its previous occupation and to transfer it to activities which were more 'profitable'. In addition there was an improvement in urban food supply as regards cereals, following an increase in procurements achieved in spite of a catastrophic harvest. This last improvement also allowed an increase in labor productivity.

On the whole, therefore, there was a better functioning of industry and a reduction of shortages which allowed rapid growth of investment.¹⁰

Increase of investment was due not only to the increase of labor productivity¹¹ but also to the increase in the number of workers in industry.¹²

These developments allowed an increase in the mass of surplus value and in accumulation at the steppes because real wages did not follow the advances in labor productivity.

The growth of labor productivity and employment was made possible by the continuation of a relative improvement in the supply of grain to the towns allowing a better recuperation of the labor forces. This improvement itself was based in 1935 on a recovery of agricultural production (which was beginning to benefit from mechanization) and on a reduction of grain exports.

During the period 1933-36, the increase of labor productivity was not solely due to the mechanical effect of better food supplies. It was also based more and more on the putting into operation progressively of new equipment (domestic or imported). It also resulted from a progressive mastery of this equipment by workers and ladies. In the final analysis it resulted from a policy which put a strong accent on labor output.

However the very size of the increase of accumulation in 1934-36 carried with it the preconditions of a new economic crisis.

In fact because of the high rate of accumulation the current limits on new increases in equipment and industrial productivity were quickly reached. The continuation of the improvement in

labor productivity met a series of obstacles in particular was worker resistance. Consequently industrial profits and the size of the surplus grew more and more slow. In 1937-38 a surplus production of capital situation had, in practice, reached. The circumstances were ripe for the crisis of 1937.

III. The 1937 crisis

The 1937 crisis differed from that of 1933 in several ways. The main differences was its duration. In fact, whereas in 1933 the amount of gross investment (in constant prices) exceeded that of 1932, 1937 was again characterized by a lower volume of investment, being 7.9 percent less than that of 1936.¹ Moreover, in 1939 investment in construction and installations (so-called investment in construction and installation) was lower by about 5 percent than that of 1936, whose level was not exceeded until 1940.² There was accordingly an investment crisis of relatively long duration. Even in 1940 the investment percentage of the GNP was smaller than in 1937.³

This time agricultural difficulties did not explain the investment stagnation. In fact only the 1936 harvest was exceptionally bad, whereas the harvests of the following years were good and in 1937 even excellent.

Stagnation of investment was, basically, bound to the slow increase of production employment⁴ and industrial labor productivity.⁵ This low increase hindered the continuation of a rapid increase of accumulation and showed that the consequences of the previous surplus production of capital had only very partially been overcome.⁶

The near stagnation of employment and of labor productivity in industry was not in accord with the mass production in 1937-40 of the enormous fixed capital invested in industry in previous years. This contradiction was due to the fact that unilateral priority development of investment intended for the production of material elements of constant capital, had a bad effect on the improvement of the conditions of reproduction of labor forces and on a productivity increase. These were

important obstacles to the acceleration of industrial development during the years 1937-40. Such obstacles reveal the scale of the previous surplus accumulation of capital and the subordination of investment to the requirements of increases in Section 1 (which produced the means of production).

Surplus accumulation of capital produced counter-productive effects which even affected strategically important industries like metallurgy and oil.¹⁹

Generally speaking, the pressure which was exerted to increase the intensity of labor and production norms led to deterioration in working conditions and lowered the quality of output.

Thus the surplus accumulation which characterized the years of expanding investment reduced the consumption of the workers and contributed to unbalanced production growth. Moreover, production increased in an irregular way at the same time as its quality fell. All this laid the ground for the 1937 crisis, which would be followed by a period of serious economic difficulties lasting up to the eve of the Nazi aggression.

Notes

1. See *Materialy po balansu narodnogo khozyaistva SSSR*. Moscow 1932 p. 54.

2. According to official figures, this rate fell from 22.2 percent in 1930 to 20.7 in 1931, 14.5 in 1932, and 5.2 percent in 1933 (see NKh. 1958g p. 80). As has been seen, these statistics show an overvalued growth rate.

3. According to official statistics this rate was 9.3 percent in 1932 and 4.8 percent in 1933 (see above p. 80). Comparison with the development of physical production shows, moreover, that the global growth rates are more substantially overestimated for consumer goods than for industrial production as a whole.

4. The change was from 20.7 percent in 1931 and 16.4 percent in 1932 (see R. Moura and R. Powell, *The Soviet Capital Stock 1928-1962* (Homewood, 1968), pp. 358-59).

5. See above.

6. *Trud v SSSR* (1936), pp. 10-11 and 244.

7. On this point see the first part of this book.

8. *Izvestiya*, February 2, 1933.

9. In 1924 gross investment in the state and cooperative sector rose from

nearly 30 percent in current prices and 13 percent in constant 1924 prices.

- (See R. Macmillan and R. Powell, *The Twentieth-Century Stagnation*, 1971).
- Investment growth continued up to 1938 (see above).
- 10 Between 1932 and 1940 the index of hourly labour production in industry grew by 66 percent, according to Hodgman's *Survey of Industrial* (p. 117) and even by 80 percent on an annual basis according to official statistics which however do not submit the index of industrial production to the necessary deflation.
- 11 Between 1932 and 1940 the number of industrial workers grew by 20 percent (See J. Barker, *The Composition of the British Workforce, 1920-1941* SIPS No. 16 (C.R.E.S., University of Birmingham, 1971)).
- 12 See above, Part 2 of this volume.
- 13 Retaining the "revised" index of industrial production calculated by Hodgman, it can be seen that this production, having risen from 100 percent in 1933 and 108 in 1938, only grew by 7.8 percent in 1940 (all figures calculated from Hodgman, *Survey of Industry*, p. 117).
- 14 See N.I.B., 1956a, p. 172.
- 15 On this point see the contribution of N. Kaplan, "Capital Formation and Allocation" in *Social Economic Growth and A Hungarian Model*, 1971, p. 41.
- 16 Between 1936 and 1940 industrial employment only increased by about 3.8 percent compared to 20 percent between 1931 and 1935.
- 17 See above, p. 117.
- 18 The internal contradictions in the industrial sector are emphasized by the following figures. After 1937 total industrial production increased at only a relatively weak pace (contrasting with the situation after the 1931 crisis). Thus the "revised" series of total industrial production (excluding military production) shows an increase of 16 percent between 1937 and 1941 (plus figures - see Hodgman, *Survey of Industry*, p. 62) that is less than 7 percent annually. And this evaluation seems too optimistic. In fact no index calculated from production in physical terms of all industrial products only a growth of 15 percent between 1937 and 1941 (annual growth of less than 3.5 percent).
- 19 Between 1937 and 1940 steel production grew only by 3.1 percent and rolled steel by 1.1 percent (see N.I.B., 1956a, p. 145). Production of pig-iron rose by only 4.6 percent in these circumstances the development of the engineering and armaments industries could take place only at the expense of other output requiring metallurgical products. Petroleum output increased during these three years by only 6.9 percent.

Crisis of overaccumulation and domination of capital

The economic crises which have just been described were the result of an accumulation which was an end in itself and which did not aim at satisfying concrete needs for consumption and production. Such crises are capitalist crises; they are tied to the reproduction, specific circumstances of relationship of exploitation that take the basic form of the wage relationship.

In the circumstances of the Soviet economy in the 1930s the contradictions engendered by the class struggle in production and distribution gave rise to open crises of surplus accumulation of capita, taking the inverted shape of surplus production crises of Western capitalism, namely the shape of a shortage of goods which becomes a situation of general shortage.

The 1933 crisis is a very good illustration of the particular features of this type of crisis, because it was marked by extremely serious shortages which involved certain means of production, consumer goods, and particularly food items, above all grains. This latter shortage resulted in the famine of 1933. The famine was simultaneously the result of a policy and the manifestation of a crisis tied to surplus accumulation, which led to an excessive procurement of grain intended to be sold on a world market to pay for equipment. This same surplus accumulation led to a substantial drainage of labor from agriculture and to many other charges on the material resources of the countryside for the benefit of accumulation and industrialization.¹

From the concrete analysis of the crises of 1929, an attempt can be made at predicting a general mechanism of the world economy under Stalinist accumulation. It occurs at a beneficent time since where the relationships were most developed and hence in introducing new equipment, that is new means of expansion, devolved in the point of preventing the standardization of agriculture of reducing the production of the surplus, finally of blocking for a period the stable continuation of that accumulation. The surplus accumulation in 1928-32 for a time made increased production of value impossible because it terminated the production of labour and of labor productivity. The fall of the rate of exploitation that was supposed to permit the accumulation process to continue on a larger scale was counteracted by prohibiting the continuation of that process because that were set to work thus came into conflict with their own ends this being a characteristic of surplus accumulation.

In 1933 the output production of capital had an absolute character (in the sense that Marx gave to it) in that at that time it was impossible to obtain a greater increase of value either by an increase in the quantity of workers or by raising still more the exploitation rate. The already occupied in production. As has been seen the severe shortages prevented the immediate continuation of the process of obtaining new designated plant houses from the outside and were an obstacle to a rapid growth in value. Finally consequently the process of industrial expansion was temporarily held back. The construction rates and factories were not receiving sufficient workers, equipment and means of production. Delays in construction and operation were consequently substantially lengthened and part of capital intended for investment was put to sleep. Capitalist firms which that plan factors had to slow down their operations so that others serving immediately the accumulation of new forms of work, could continue to function.

Putting to sleep some of the factories and construction sites increased the shortages which were becoming enormous. It did this directly when it halted the main supply of products

necessary to cover the needs of the latter. It did it reluctantly with a minimum effort by raising (by the poor management of production units) the regular utilization of factors. Thus the stakes became greater and an increasing share of investment was frozen while the value of social capital investment was slowed down. From 1934 the intensity of the crisis eased little by little. The crisis disappeared thanks to a progressive clearing up but lengthened resulting from a reactivation of latent forces. This allowed certain industries to increase production and certain construction works to be completed. The 1937 crisis developed basically in the same manner as the preceding crisis with the relative importance of shortages moving from agriculture to industry to such an extent that during more than three years (from 1937 to 1941) productive investment was below the level of 1936.

I. The specific nature of the "Soviet" economic crises of the 1930s

There can be no question within the framework of the present study of attempting to present a detailed analysis of capitalist crises and their various specific forms. On the other hand it is necessary to make several observations about the crises experienced by Western countries so as to better illuminate the capitalist character of the Soviet crises of the thirties as well as their specific features.

At first it must be underlined that the economic crises of Western capitalism themselves took several different forms. For example, during the 19th century economic crises would see themselves peaked mainly by falls in prices which only affected the volume of production to a small extent. On the other hand in the 20th century with the development of monopolies and of populism, these characteristics were reversed: the main aspect of crises is the collapse of production, unemployment and employment while prices keep falling since World War Two may even rise substantially engendering the phenomenon known as *stagflation*.

Pointing out these particular features of the different economic crises of "Western" capitalism does not exhaust the subject of

their specific forms. In a way which here can only be evoked, two a distinction should in fact be made between crises where the apparently decisive element is 'market saturation' for certain goods (and which therefore begin with an "overproduction" of these goods), paralyzing part of the productive structure and leading to a 'general overproduction' and crises whose apparently decisive element is the fall of profit rates which lead to a reduction of investment, the closing of a great number of factories, unemployment, "underconsumption" etc. In reality these two manifestations of the crisis are inseparable for the "tendency toward a lower profit rate" and the "tendency towards overproduction" are intimately linked. These crises mark the crash of normal conditions of reproduction a temporary failure of regulation by the law of value.

More deeply another distinction must be made between two types of crisis: on the one hand there are those from which it is possible to "emerge" while returning to the same regime of accumulation and the same mode of regulation as before the crisis - these are the small crises. On the other hand there are those from which it is not possible to emerge except through a change of the regime of accumulation and the mode of regulation: these are the great crises marked by especially violent human festerations of resistance to capital exploitation by those subjected to it.⁴

Here we are interested only in the small crises which manifest themselves as crises of underconsumption because the Soviet crises of 1913 and 1917 were also "small crises".

Hiring the place which prepares and prepares the ground for such crises in Western capitalism those who direct the process of production and reproduction struggle to obtain the maximum return from the part of capital that they control and to accumulate as much as possible within the limits imposed on them by the global reproduction of the conditions of production. This tendency toward mass multi accumulation is the form taken by the class struggle in production. It tends to bring an increasing abstraction of living labor to dead labor and to lead to the expropriation of the workers whose knowledge is more and more incorporated into the automatic system of machines. In the short term the less struggle in production

is portrayed as the representatives of production. In fact, one letter according to Marx's formula says nothing about capital or labour, it says "new which are imposed upon us".

The struggle in which the agents of capital are engaged in this way has as a consequence at other times of increase of accumulation and, by that fact, a reduction of the demand for labor power grows rapidly according to a certain ratio of nominal wages and of real wages. This contributes especially to increase the demand for consumer goods more rapidly than their supply increases and brings about a rise of prices for these goods following capital operating in section 2 which produces consumer goods to take a turn. This is due to the higher cost of production of these goods. However the tendency of capital, workers and bosses as a group to adopt the principles determined by a higher capital content which tends to reduce the average rate of profit and the rhythm at which the invested capital and employment increase. These tendencies make the wages fall more or less at the same time that in consequence of supply of consumer goods occurs thanks to the cumulation previously mentioned in Section 2. In such conditions part of the consumer goods appearing on the market have more difficulty finding a buyer. This is a sign of overproduction of goods. The latter and the reduction of the profit rate is about a full circulation and thereby a fall in demand for means of production and hence a slackening of activity in Section 1 which produces the means of production. From this point the crisis spreads and takes the form of general overproduction.

Let us now see what happens in "Section" capital when there is a sharp and sudden change in price of fixed capital. One of these conditions the class struggle in practice is strengthened by the power of state. Capitalists are obliged as a bring about maximum utilization and prevent disorganization of Section 1. This form of regulation of the internal laws of capital brings about deep changes in the process of the market in passing out of crises. Here we shall now at last a few factors of influence those which really important to the process of the market.

Firstly we note that during these years the periods of accumulation are marked by a rise of nominal wages but by a stagnation and sometimes even a lowering of real wages. In fact in the absence of an increase in the supply of goods (an increase blocked by state intervention) the rate of employment and of nominal wages makes relative prices substantially and this in spite of all the talk about price control. We also note that the measures taken concerning wages and prices are on the other hand, sufficient to ensure that made by production units in Section 2 are at a constant price. In these circumstances rises of relative prices increase the financial resources available to Section 2 to increase the fiscal receipts of the budget. These principles then serve to increase investment in Section 1. An important difference (compared to Western capitalism) is the distribution of accumulation funds during the period upward movement. This change has remarkable effects. The relative slowing down of accumulation of Section 2 puts a brake on an increase of production of goods. Even though frequently there is not a tendency towards overproduction of consumer goods but on the contrary a tendency towards shortage of this kind of goods. This tendency is strongly manifested under the particular form it adopts in Soviet society: the tendency of capital to accumulate for the sake of accumulation.

If the efficiency in a given form of capitalism does not according to the improvement it allows in the living conditions of workers such an improvement not being the goal of capitalist accumulation but according to its capacity to increase the rate of accumulation it can be said that Soviet type capitalism is more efficient than any other.¹

This efficiency moreover has nothing to do with the planning (since the state are far from being strictly followed, although above all from a democratic, because uncontrolled, of capital). This domination is achieved through a number of mechanisms in particular by a firm centralization of the administration of capital by the state and by the paternal influences of the social forces that might attempt to put the continuation of the accumulation process. The paradox results from the low wages, pushed as far as possible by the State especially at

of production and expression which would allow them to interfere in a coherent way in the lives of society.

The essential role played by the practice that has just been mentioned is the exacerbation of the process of accumulation. This is confirmed by the fact that even when the plans forced as it had several times after World War Two a faster development of Section 2 than Section 1, in practice they were not observed. The attempt to implement such a program in Section 1 and it was only exceptionally that section developed as fast as had been forecast by the plans. One can notice at several stages an important difficulty in fitting the planned development of accumulation and of Section 1. It has been already denoted objective forces favouring accumulation, namely the management itself as presented as soon as the power of capital merges with the power of the state and the workers are forced if the possibility of resisting the measures of an administration as to put up resistance to the tendency towards material accumulation.

Secondly, it will be noted that the specific forms of resistance which characterize Soviet Capitalism are connected with the fact that the priority given to accumulation in Section 2 creates obstacles to the adoption by Section 2 of more just plans which would allow that Section to experience a rapid increase of labor productivity before there is an adjustment in the main power shortage.

In the circumstances that have just been described, the power to keep a certain period of substantial accumulation inevitably brings in a combination of two shortcomings that of one type exists and that of another type of production.

At an early moment the key element of these shortcomings ends to exacerbate and one can see this especially at the beginning of the 1950s, the accumulation effort, while the authorities, the planners and the administration strive to accelerate the shortfalls by increasing even more. The supplementary investment effort only makes matters worse, multiplying difficulties, particularly in the industrial construction sites. Thus, in 1952, the movement toward extension of accumulation was held back and this coincided with the beginning of a crisis. The slowdown of accumulation continued until part of the investments made prior much earlier maturity. At this point the problems

into operation of more productive means of production, which in those investments permitted the labor force, the raising of charges, and the reduction of the mass of surplus value extracted and invested.

Such are briefly some of the specific features of the economic crisis which took place during the 1930s. Even these features are also found in the postwar period, since the social and political relationships that were established in the 1930s still remain fundamentally the same.

As a last remark on these questions it should be recalled that the real specificity of Soviet production lies in that the backlog of the reindustrialization process results in absolute overproduction of capital whose particularities we shall analyze shortly. As for the general nature of the crisis, this results not only from overaccumulation but also from crises in maturity but also from the relative effects of control exercised on prices. In fact, thanks to this, the generalization of shortages does not provoke either a general and global price increase that could reduce or wages. The reasons are, as always, differences in the material particularities of Soviet crises seem to be tied to a specific relation of overaccumulation and repression. In addition,

one other feature must also be noted with regard to planning: permit the continuation of what Marx called 'bourgeois ownership' (even though in a formal sense this has been abolished). The ownership in fact has nothing to do with what is usually called private ownership of means of production which is only legal private ownership. Bourgeois or capitalist ownership is manifested by the same relationships which allow the exploitation of wage labor. Marx might have denied the practical character usage of the category of ownership when he criticized the way in which Proudhon had recourse to it in his theory. Thus he wrote:

'Ownership is a vulgar term; the superior categories of M. Proudhon's system. In the first place the division of land and all the other categories of M. Proudhon are social relationships whose total form is what today is called ownership; outside these relationships bourgeois ownership is only a metaphor.'

and practical basis on. When M. Tsvetkov presents something as an independent relationship he commits more than an error of method. He clearly proves that he has not grasped the chain which binds all the forms of bourgeois production.¹⁰

State ownership leaves intact the wage relationship of population and surplus value as a specific form of capital ownership which develops thoroughly with state planning. This development creates conditions that permit the expansion of new forms of excess of overproduction of capital.

From the end of the 1920s in the USSR the conditions which create an arising of economic crisis due to relative overproduction of capital typical of Western capitalism were largely eliminated which made possible and inevitable the occurrence of a new form of crisis, the crisis of absolute overproduction of capital. This was demonstrated by the fact that after a certain period of rising investment the continuation of the accumulation process no longer led to an increase in the mass of surplus value as much as the very sum of profits and profits from the putting to good use of labor power. It was frustrated this made it impossible to continue increasing accumulation.

In Book 3 of *Capital* Marx deals with this phenomenon of production. In his own terms the author takes place when the increased capital produces only a mass of surplus value more or less equal to or even less than it was before its increase. He explains this hypothesis by referring to the assumption of capital increases in relation to the working population in such proportions that the absolute labor that the population provides cannot be attracted nor can the relative hours of work be extended. He then shows the principal effect of such absolute overproduction of capital:

In the circumstances of Western capitalism of the 19th century the structure form of overproduction of capital constitutes a limiting case since economic crises went forth well before the realization of its condition of appearance because in particular of the disproportions which appear in the different productions and/or of the chain effect of the increase in profits which strikes certain enterprises later other elements begin

ensure that "Western" capitalism does not experience crises due to absolute overproduction of capital, in fact the industrialized capitalist countries have recourse more and more to the export of capital to countries where capitalism is less developed or they import manpower from these same countries.

In the Soviet Union in the 1930s the limiting case of absolute overproduction of capital became the "normal form" of the crisis, which explains why it manifested itself by a generalization of shortages because accumulation was pushed to extremes, as already seen, to the detriment and the disregard of the satisfaction of consumer needs.

This type of crisis, which pushes to extremes the tendency toward accumulation for the sake of accumulation, arrives to the very limit one of the features of capitalism: the domination of exchange-value over use-value.

Thus there manifests itself in Soviet capitalism an "indifference to use value" which tends to spread to the whole economy, with the exception of the military sector and destined to the military sector (for there the survival of the authorities is involved).

Indifference to use value is in some way incorporated in plan indices, insofar as the latter give prime importance to "gross" value of production that is, to the quantity of money which this production is held to represent. The race for quantity therefore becomes basic.

II. The substitution of the apparent domination of the plan for the apparent domination of competition

Examination of Soviet economic crises illuminates the circumstance that neither state intervention through the plan nor the extension of state ownership, nor the claimed "new class content" of the authorities after they had been taken over by the Bolshevik Party "abolished" the laws of capita, movement which result from the dominant role played by the wage relationship of exploitation and the forms of class struggle that are engendered by the reproduction of that relationship.

Two laws are still those of capitalism. However, the way in which they manifested themselves was transformed. Thus the bourgeois class, leaving the farms, dominated by

... gives the pertinence of the competition which may be used the value of its forces. It is necessary to put aside vulgar concepts that lead to a purely negative definition of competition, viewing it the regulation of a function of extremes, absence of monopoly, absence of regulation, absence of state intervention, etc. The negative definitions must therefore be replaced by a positive definition which shows that competition is a conflict of struggle between the different fractions of social capital.

Answers: points must be emphasized here

(1) The struggle relationship between the different fragments of social capital is inherent in the very existence of this latter which always takes the form of separation as are thus separated of the different fragments of capital necessarily stems from the wage relationship from the fundamental separation of the direct producers from their means of production. The latter entails the separation of the different processes of production through which operates the reproduction of social capital where these are taken the form of the reproduction of constant products of that capital. In the Soviet economy the separation of the different processes of production and of the different fragments of social capital manifests itself by the family, city, industrial enterprises which in no way contribute to a single state trust as is imagined at least by various Soviet theoreticians including Bukharin. The necessary separation of the different fragments of social capital has the consequence that the sole state ownership and planning there exists a planned production and accordingly the conditions and the basis of intervention from this form of production.

(2) The struggle between different targets of socialist capital was manifested, as ever, by the administration and the sum of the largest possible fraction of surplus value. In the Soviet economy this manifested especially by the demand for investment credit and a large sum of means of production which necessarily emanated from the various Soviet enterprises and funds. The accumulation of these demands constantly contained the tendency of substitutes in the inflation of their targets.

(2) The struggle between the different fragments of capital (competition) therefore is no other than that Marx called the relationship that capitalist states have as much as with other capital.¹⁶

(3) In other words competition is nothing but a struggle of capital which looks like an external competition. It is the terms of this external relationship which are changed by the action of changes affecting the concrete relations between the different fragments of capital. These relations give rise to different factors of competition — state intervention, economic plan, etc. because it has been a result of a series of ill-sorted conflicts such as:

Thus the intervention of the state in the planning of capital is in of a possible control over the economy and leads to a new fetishism. But if this intervention is limited to the fetishism of the state and the form of state. These fetishisms help to have the character required for production and feed the myth of the omnipotence of capital carried out by a state which organizes and distributes monetary means of accumulation.

The different forms that competition takes are the result of a historic process: the history of the development of productive forces and of less strong ones.

In the Soviet Union from the end of the 1920s competition took mainly the form of planning. This planning was done under the joint action of a series of elements of which the most important was the massive development of primitive accumulation through centralized planning class struggles which led to a certain form of state ownership and of the concentration of the rural masses themselves tied to the form of exploitation between capital and the working class which presents state ownership and planning as the abolition of capitalism.

In these circumstances the predominance of state ownership and planning complements the continuation of capital because they had to eliminate what Marx called "the legal or extralegal obstacles restricting the freedom (of capital) to move between different branches of production". Thus the constant revolution, the permanent law of capital only remains through the plan which pushes forward mass rural accumulation and the priority development of agriculture.

This, and the nature of the form of state planning, is also in contradiction with another basic principle, namely the rate of surplus value and the character of the economic system tends to force the conflicts between the different forms of labour to a standstill. Because of this point it seems important to, present at least briefly in the sense of showing that the Stalinists in the general terminology of the theory of social capital.

The appearance of the rate of social capital is connected with the abolition of exchange as it is an all-around social relationship bearing specific contradictions. The role of the state can ensure a rational distribution of the labour process of production and a regular growth of production and consumption in which constant participation in the general movement which is that of the contradictions of capitalist production. Hence also the importance of the objective conditions of price and wage policy and the efforts to avoid these social contradictions by using political instruments as instruments. By that placing the economic and social power of v makes the social contradictions more acute and exacerbates the contradictions of production.

To finish with these remarks it should be noted that with the development of state planning has taken its toll. At the end of the 1920s strongly helped the leadership of the Party had dominated those at the top of the state apparatus. The expansion of this has inspired the Party leadership to pay attention only to the sums of money which were to be invested, owing to account of material shortages. At the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s money fetishism and its effects dominated those at the top of the state apparatus. The expansion of the fact that the PPSD resources were insufficient and incomplete. Such an attitude is explained by a fear for concrete results. Such an attitude is explained by a fear for the power of others. As Birkhoff said the Party with in the power of others. As Birkhoff said the Party with leadership was thus encouraged to believe that if we had money one will also have everything else.²

Also to be noted are the extraordinary differences which were born from the combination of money fetishism with the same type from the combination of money fetishism with state fascism and clan fetishism. It was this combination which led the Soviet communist leadership to declare:

We are not bound by any other than law - the law of all of them is dictated by the will of human beings.³

It was again this combination of leftism which led him to invite Soviet economist, Vossberg, to claim:

We are introducing enormous changes in all aspects of human life and in a revolutionary way we shall penetrate the forces of nature.¹

This is the enchanted world which also gave birth to the idea of a curve of economic growth moving upwards and accelerating, with Stalin talking about "rising Bolshevik curves" as opposed to "falling Trotskyist curves."²

The economic crises reveal the illusory character of all these declarations. However, they are not enough to cause the disappearance of the fetishisms of money, state and plan, for the latter are the product of dominant economic, social and political relationships.

Notes

1. Thus the Soviet industrialization of the 1930s brought to the peasants in the USSR dramatic consequences analogous to those that a British author translated in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries brought Irish and Indian peasants who were also condemned by the million to famine.
2. The term western capitalism conveniently designates the various forms of capitalism characterized by the predominance of legal private ownership of the means of production and relatively limited state interference with the process of accumulation, the distribution of investment and the fixing of prices and wages.
3. See A. Lipietz, "Le double complexe à la crise" in *Les Temps modernes*, June 1980, pp. 2212ff, especially 2224.
4. On these various points see above pp. 2222-2228 and, by the same author *Crise et inflation, pourquoi?* (Paris, 1979). Also see the Introduction by this author to the CEPNEMAP text on "Le redéploiement," (pp. 1-8).
5. The crisis that the Soviet economy is presently experiencing is, on the contrary a "great crisis" marked by a long-term decrease of the production growth rate. This crisis indicates the growing inadequacy of the regime of accumulation and of the method of control to the requirements of an increase of general labor productivity.
6. K. Marx, "Principles for a critique of political economy" in *Grundrisse-Economie*, Vol. 2, (Paris 1968), pp. 294-95.

- 14 In a strict sense competition thus defined pertains to firstly that of capital but the latter necessarily engenders particular forms of competition or combines with forms of competition inherent to simple material relationships. Thus it is possible to distinguish competition between producers, between buyers, between workers, between landlords, among tenants, landed proprietors etc. In the present text it is not possible to analyse those different forms of competition which in any case are themselves dominated by the competition of capital. In S. Kunitomo ed., *Marc Lénine sur Politicheskaya Économia* Vol. 1 (Kontakuzin), Berlin 1923 may be found a collection of different texts by Marx and Engels on competition and its different forms.
- 15 The struggle that different enterprises have to put up for investment allocations still characterise "Soviet" planning. They also characterise countries that have the same kind of planning. Thus C. Bottrosian writes that the British plan of the 1970s was "the result of a permanent struggle of the different lobbies for credits with no consideration for overall direction" (*Le Nouvel Observateur* July 11 1981 p. 41).
- 16 See K. Marx, *Principles for a critique of political economy* note 6 p. 244. In the same text a little earlier Marx writes: "By definition competition is based on the interior nature of capital, its essential resolution manifesting itself and being realized as the interaction between numerous capitals as an external tendency of an internal necessity (capital not existing nor interacting except as a plurality of capitals). It is in their interaction that the own movement appears" (see above p. 264 also see K. Marx, *Foundations*, Vol. 2, p. 157).
- 17 Marx deals with this topic in *Le chapitre crédit du Capital* Paris 1973 p. 180.
- 18 B. Chavance has analysed relevantly and carefully the different banking forms assumed by this imaginary abolition of capital in his book *Le capital socialiste* (Paris, 1980).
- 19 N. Hettner in et al. *La Question paysanne en URSS* Paris 1973 p. 233.
- 20 Quoted in Vol. 2, of this work p. 389.
- 21 PK No. 1 1930 pp. 21ff quoted by E. Zalokh, *Planification* 64 Note 1 (italics are by C.B.)
- 22 Stalin Works Vol. XII pp. 730-40 (Report to October Party Congress June 27, 1930).

Conclusion

A capitalism of a new type

If one wanted to summarize as briefly as possible certain of the conclusions that result from the preceding pages, one might say that during the 1930s the Soviet Union experienced radical economic and social changes whose essential consequences are as follows: The crushing of the peasants, whose means of production were expropriated, and their transformation into kolkhozniks or state farmworkers, when they were not obliged to exile themselves to the towns or were not deported; expropriation of the artisans, of small trade and small industry for the benefit of the state sector; the destruction of what was left of the independence (already very restricted in the 1920s) of the workers' trade-union organizations and the transformation of the latter into mere appendices of enterprise managements; the subjection of wage-earners to a factory despotism of an extreme brutality; the putting into practice of "labor legislation" which in reality was penal legislation; the development of mass repression enabling the imposition of penal and concentration camp labor on a large scale; state centralization of capital and efforts to subordinate the accumulation of the latter and economic growth to a state plan.

The process of social and economic transformation of the 1930s did not in any way eliminate capitalist social relationships; on the contrary it reinforced them. It increasingly made the wage relationship into a relationship of fundamental exploitation.

By favoring the extension and deepening of capitalist social relationships, the process of transformation which marks the 1930s in the USSR pushed to extremes the contradictions of capital and led to crises of absolute overaccumulation which manifested themselves through general shortages.

The process which has just been summarized permitted rapid growth of some industries, which helped to alter the place of the Soviet Union in international economic and political relationships. At the same time this process increased the internal economic imbalances in the Soviet Union and the inequalities of its development; it turned agriculture into a sector that was structurally weak but from which the state could extract a relatively high surplus product. It permitted an increase of labor productivity, although the advance of the latter did not correspond with the intensification of work and the scale of material accumulation, and there was a deterioration of the quality of production.

The growing place occupied by the wage relationship of exploitation and by the capitalist division of labor, and the shape of the movement of economic contradictions (which governed the cyclic nature of growth and crises) throw light on the nature of the social and economic system which developed during the 1930s. It was a capitalism that had eliminated, more than any other, the precapitalist forms of production and which tended to subject to an exceptional degree the totality of workers to the requirements of accumulation for accumulation. These features of "Soviet" capitalism, and the preminent role allotted to the state and the Party, make it a *capitalism of a new type*.

This latter was germinating in the October Revolution, with its concept of a socialism for which state capitalism would be the immediate antechamber. In this sense, if a revolutionary character is recognized in the economic and social transformations of the 1930s, it can be said that they completed the capitalist work of the October Revolution, whilst that completion had been checked up to then by the peasant revolution and by the relative egalitarianism that had been imposed by the ambiguous relationships that the Bolshevik Party maintained with the working class between October and the end of the 1920s.

It seems to me that by talking of a capitalism of a new type one is describing much better the fundamental social relationships of the Soviet economic and social system, better than by talking of bureaucratic collectivism, or of the state mode of production or of state socialism. However, the use of this term obviously cannot suffice, for it does not allow certain characteristics of "Soviet" capitalism to be grasped, and it leaves others in the shadows; first among these others is political totalitarianism. To show up this latter it is necessary to establish an explicit relationship between the capitalism of new type born in the USSR and the political conditions of class domination which made possible its emergence. These are the problems which must be tackled in Volume 4 of the present work.

Bibliography

AN index and a general bibliography for the period, including just the essential titles, references, and sources, will be provided in the next volume, *The Dominators*, which will also be devoted to the third period 1930-41. This will be the final volume of *Class Struggles in the USSR*.